

THE LIVING AGE.

Seventh Series.
Volume I. }

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{ From Beginning.
Vol. CXXIX.

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FROM BEGINNING
Vol. CCXIX.

THOMAS FRANCIS BAYARD.

It is difficult, even under the most favorable circumstances, to make an adequate estimate of the character of a man whose long public career has just been closed by death. Many of the elements entering into it have been obscured by time, or lost sight of in the competitions of our restless life; besides, there are so many unrevealed quantities that it is by no means easy to fix the amount or value of the work he has done for his time, or his probable place in history. These difficulties are enhanced when it is a close personal friend of many years about whom one must write. Nor is the task made easier when, as in Mr. Bayard's case, the character is a type which has almost entirely passed out of the public life of modern countries.

I shall not deal with dates or events except so far as they may grow out of my theme, which is the character of the man rather than the successive steps by which it was either developed or shown. Mr. Bayard's position before the American public was absolutely unique. In the best and highest sense, it was an inheritance not only of qualities, but of place; and yet it was not fixed by the law of primogeniture, nor won in war and conflict. The fact that his great-grandfather, his grandfather, his father, his uncle, and himself, saw service in the United States Senate from the three counties which constitute the little

State of Delaware is no doubt an interesting fact. It is still more interesting to know that not one of them was preferred for any other reason except recognized fitness.

Mr. Bayard, then, during the whole of his public career was sure of his standing. He had no personal or party contests to weaken or break his influence, to waste his time, to sour his temper, or to disturb his peace of mind. He was not forced to turn himself into an office-broker, or to be an errand boy for all the petty ambitions of his state. He was not compelled to master the tactics of party organization, and thus to make himself a drill-master rather than a statesman. Nor was he obliged either to become a boss himself, or to take orders from some man who had achieved this position. Having no intermediaries between himself and the people he represented, he was able to devote himself without question to the public service, whose boundaries—according to his interpretation—were coterminous with the public interest.

Until he had passed forty, Mr. Bayard devoted himself almost wholly to his profession. His knowledge of the law had been laid upon deep and sure foundations. He did not stop, as many public men do nowadays, when he had acquired merely enough of theory to enter upon the practice. In this, as in all things, he insisted upon going to the bottom. The work

of the first offices he held was purely professional, in no sense political. They pertained to his own little Delaware, which, as one of the border states, was as nearly as possible half slave and half free. This geographical position, combined with his incapacity to take extreme views, made him at all times a sincere, patriotic friend of the Union, the advocate of constitutional measures, and the opponent of the drastic methods resorted to on both sides.

He recognized, more clearly than most of his contemporaries, what problems must follow the abolition of slavery by violence. The dominance of commercialism in politics; the certainty of riot and corruption in the conquered states, and the resulting demoralization in all; the hardening effect of passion and division, the slow growth toward real unity, and their effect upon both conqueror and conquered; the perils inseparable from unsettled financial conditions,—all these appealed with peculiar force to the thoughtful and truly conservative man who stood on the threshold of great responsibilities. This long period of careful preparation had a decided effect upon his public career. It accentuated the seriousness with which he entered upon the work before him, and so increased his sense of duty as to keep him in public life long after interest and inclination had made retirement desirable.

When Mr. Bayard entered the United States Senate in 1869, his party was an insignificant minority in that body. It was just far enough away from the Civil War to give the American people some real conception of the problems which that contest had created or brought into prominence. Passion ran high; bigotry easily degenerated into proscription, and patriotism was subjected to

so much abuse that Dr. Johnson's biting epigram was often a true description. In spite of this, Mr. Bayard soon made his influence felt in the Federal councils and in the country. He never wavered in his attempt to overcome the narrow sectional feeling which, for many years after the war had come to an end, was its most prominent heritage. He did this by a resolute insistence that law must be dominant in every part of the country. He and his associates took part with rare ability, courage and prudence in all debates relating to the states recently in insurrection. As these gradually recovered their status, the little band received accessions. Aided by a change in public sentiment in many other states, they were so recruited that, in twelve years after Mr. Bayard's entrance into the Senate, he was elected president of the body in which, when he entered it, he had been one of an insignificant and powerless minority.

It was not only the bitterness of parties and sections that ran riot during this period. It was accompanied by the rankest kind of heresy on financial questions. Currency, coinage, and banking were then little understood. In every state of the Union, men in both political parties, recognized as leaders, permitted themselves to be drawn into advocacy of the notion that paper was money. This was succeeded by devotion to a diluted coinage. Mr. Bayard resisted these tendencies with energy, intelligence and persistence. From the beginning, and at all times, in season or out of season, whether as senator, secretary of state, private citizen or ambassador, he never failed to raise his voice against paper issues and their endowment with the quality of legal tender, nor to oppose the free coinage of silver. No other responsible public man

in either party has made such an honorable and consistent record on all these related issues, so that, if history is written aright, it will give Thomas F. Bayard a commanding place among the men who created on this question a public sentiment which placed their country in the front rank among progressive nations and kept it there.

Mr. Bayard's position in the Senate may be interpreted in the light of his attitude on these two great questions. He was not a mere specialist in public life. His mind was eclectic enough; his interest sufficiently comprehensive to make nothing human alien to him. So he went on speaking, writing, voting, acting—according to need or opportunity, and as conscience and an instructed understanding led him—upon all the varied concerns of a great country during a period of change and violence. In due time he came to aspire to the Presidency, at once the goal of American ambition, and the will-o'-the-wisp of politics. None knew better than he how eminent was his fitness for this place, both by nature and training. If he had not known this he would never have consented for a moment to consider himself in relation to it, as he carried conscience into his personal ambitions no less than into his private life, profession or public service. He would have scorned as much to seek a place without fitness for it as to take a professional fee without earning it. The party conditions of the time made attainment of this impossible, but the failure to command it increased rather than diminished his influence over his countrymen, and gave him new zest for devoting himself to the public service in the places which came to him.

His service as secretary of state was the culminating point in his home career. It was once a tradition in

American politics—one now generally departed from—that the candidate who had received the second highest number of votes in the nominating convention was to be asked to accept this office. Mr. Bayard and Mr. Cleveland were, until then, strangers, but I have often heard each of them express astonishment that he could have been a candidate against the other. Mr. Bayard brought to the duties of his new place that high devotion to the public interest which was always his distinguishing characteristic. The foreign relations of the United States were never conducted with greater dignity and firmness. Running through his state papers, which were admirable in temper and form, was that attachment, always uppermost in his mind, to fixed principles. During his four years of service as secretary the foundation was laid for that better understanding with England which has developed so many important consequences, and has brought to its support, on both sides of the ocean, many men who might otherwise have been indifferent or hostile.

It is less necessary to give enlarged attention to Mr. Bayard's diplomatic service than to any other. It was passed under the eye of the people of two great countries. The spectacle presented was that of a man of courage and character bringing them to bear in the discharge of his duties,—mainly those of an unofficial kind. He was nearly sixty-five when he entered upon his work. He had declined the tendered honor of his old place at the head of the Cabinet, but consented to accept the newly created position of ambassador to the Court of St. James. He felt that it gave him an opportunity to do good work for mankind, and, at the same time, to serve his country. He had not the least trace of the old-fashioned diplo-

matist in him. It could never have entered into his mind to conceive the truth or the policy of the dictum that "speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts." He firmly believed that in telling the people of the country to which he was accredited, what his own country meant, and what were its genius, its duties, and its hopes, he was doing the greatest good to mankind. While he spoke often and with perfect freedom, he never spoke idly, nor in any way compromised the dignity either of his own country or its representative. If there were at home persons who never forgave him for making his country and theirs known as it had never been known before, and for becoming the most popular man in England, it is scarcely necessary, when estimating his work, to stop long enough to give them importance.

It was a pleasure to see how he enjoyed it all, how eagerly he learned new things or revived the memory of old ones! He went into every rank and order of society, seeking in each to do his chosen work as best he could. His keenest enjoyment, however, came from those meetings with strong, self-reliant, skilled workers in the varied trades. I can recall, for instance, that the pleasure he derived from a meeting of engine-drivers was akin to that of a boy seeing a new sight.

He greatly prized, too, the privilege of seeing so many types of individuals and classes. He was equally at home with a body of bishops, or the worshippers in the chapel of some humble religious denomination. He was perfectly free from bigotry or intolerance. His charity comprehended all honest opinions. Although he held his own with a firm grasp, he not only gave others the same privilege, but liked to meet

those who knew how to make themselves felt in their own way. His religious convictions were strong and firmly grounded. I have never known a man who better illustrated the truth, that it is those of greatest and strongest mind who believe the most and are, at the same time, the most humble and tolerant. Sentiment was strongly developed in him; but few men have less of mere sentimentalism. This accounts for the fact that, speaking as freely as he might, his utterances were devoid of those defects of taste so common with public men everywhere.

He knew the elements which enter into the character of a great people. Simplicity, tenderness, love of truth, justice, and fairness must, in his view, lie at the foundation. He was interested in what Lincoln has felicitously termed the "plain people of the land." Neither did he exact that rigid uniformity of institutions so dear to precisians. As human nature was varied, so he did not expect actual, practical individuals or communities created by them to be cast in the same mould. Better than any of his contemporaries, he recognized the character of the people in the South and West, seeing those distinctions and differences which were hid from most. His geographical situation, no less than the cast of his mind, gave him this power; and yet he was far more likely to tell these people, and all others, the things they needed to be told rather than those they wanted to hear. He could not comprehend insincerity. He knew his own duty to public opinion, and had a perfect idea of what it ought to be in order to square with right and safety. If it did not do this, he had no idea of giving way to the idle clamor of the moment, or to the demands of time-serving politicians. In spite of

this devotion to principle, he knew how to define the word "compromise" without making it synonymous with "surrender."

With all his good temper and toleration, he had the power to be severe and impatient. He had nothing but contempt for the man who could use a public place for private enrichment, or influence for the designing, the weak, or the demagogic; or for that other, not uncommon in politics everywhere, who, after years of corruption and dissembling, concludes, in his older days, to kick down the ladders by which he has climbed, thus seeking to do penance for many wrongs. He had no patience with pretension or mere profession. No amount of wealth, no ostentation, no long prayers or feigned piety, could conceal from him for a moment unworthy motives or dangerous.

As he exacted much from himself and all leaders of opinion, so he set up a lofty standard of idea and action for the people of his country. He had a sublime, ingrained confidence in popular government, and was a convinced republican. He was severely criticized at one time during his residence in England for saying that the American people liked the strong man in their politics. His meaning was clear. It was the man of strong, well-settled opinions and firm character that he had in mind. The adventurous man on horseback, who is often heralded, but seldom comes in modern life, had no more consistent hater than this plain-spoken denouncer of shams and lover of the genuine.

Mr. Bayard's oratory was not of the display order. It had both beauty and finish, but was seldom ornate, never mere sound without sense. It was straightforward, direct, clear-cut, not overweighted with simile or figure of speech, nor yet with reference. As he was too serious, too

much in earnest, to give attention to humor, so it was not probable that he ever intentionally raised a laugh. He was quick at repartee, and could use sarcasm or irony with great effect, if he distrusted the motives of his opponent. His speeches combined, in proper proportions, thought, and the results of reading. When he saw that public speaking was to be part of his life he began early and trained himself thoroughly. As he grew older, and was able to get more and more away from mere partisan speaking, he acquired greater ease and polish. His intellectual relations to his time may be summed up with Bacon's thought: Reading had made him a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.

He was no less generous to subordinates or inferiors than to superiors and equals. He liked work to be well done, and, as a result, was likely to do for himself much that other men would have left to assistants. Good health, a temperate and simple life, unflagging industry, and a conscientious determination to do everything well, enabled him to perform with acceptance the duties which fell to him, and not the less so because he never shirked responsibility. He gave his full confidence to few, but once passed, it was without concealment or grudging. His relations with some of his political opponents were very intimate, while membership or high place in his own party was by no means a passport to his favor or confidence. He never courted the rising star, so that in many instances he had no personal association with, or even knowledge of, some of the leading men who sat with him in the Senate, or became leaders of the House of Representatives at the other end of the Capitol. He did not formally or consciously exclude; he merely ignored those who did nothing to command

his confidence; at the same time none could be more sympathetic or helpful when conscientious, honest and congenial new men came to the front.

On the personal side he had those lovable qualities which accompany simplicity of character and openness of aim. There was no pretension, no tergiversation, no doubtful or questionable place in him. He was admirable whether as host or guest. He talked well, but he did not monopolize, nor was he prone to speak of himself except when drawn to do so. With women and children he had that graciousness and consideration only found in those sure of position, who, in whatever circle they may be found, are gentlemen in the highest sense.

He was a close student of the best books on all economic questions and those which involved the origin or application of great legal and political principles. He was a persistent reader of poetry, and had the old-

fashioned habit of quoting it, generally with much aptness. He had also read widely in popular science, and in theological criticism of the highest order. He was a buyer of books, and had an exacting taste in typography.

Mr. Bayard passed nearly half a century of active life before the public, more than thirty years of this time being spent in office of one grade or another. During all this time—and for a circle constantly widening from the very beginning—he stood as the representative of lofty ideals in character and principle. Recognition of this came without conscious seeking on his part, and, as he was absolutely free from cant of any kind, he never posed because of it. He has gone out of the world leaving a character, public and private, free from insincerity, sordidness or self-seeking. As became his origin and traditions he was a man without fear and without reproach.

The Contemporary Review.

George F. Parker.

MY INDIAN GARDEN.

My garden lies on the borders of the great plains that are known as the North-West Provinces of India. Half a mile off, a river makes its way slowly among the sandbanks that rise daily in ever increasing patches above its surface. This river is the Ganges, and it is now fast shrinking from the immense volume of its monsoon flood to the comparatively narrow stream it becomes here in the hot weather. Two months ago its waters, nearly on a level with the bank, washed over the roots of a gigantic *pipal*-tree that marks the riverward limit of my garden. To-day all that is left to show how far the flood extended, is a shal-

low creek lying directly under the outspread arms of the *pipal*. Here the lazy buffaloes come to crop the juicy grass that grows along its margin, or to spend hours rolling and wallowing in the water. Further out the silence is occasionally broken by the splash of the pied kingfisher making his headlong plunge in pursuit of the *chilwas*, or tiny fish, on which he feeds.

The giant tree is perilously near the edge of the bank, and is in danger of being swept away by the river during its season of flood. But for the present the tree is safe, and is now a noble sight as it stands with its vast limbs clothed in their mantle of graceful

quivering leaves. In the spring the tree presents a most beautiful appearance. Each of the semi-transparent budding leaves is of a delicate copper tint, and glows when seen against the sunlight as if blood ran in its veins. This warm hue gives place gradually to a delicious tender green, and at last the leaf assumes the glazed opaque color of the mature foliage. Each leaf is mounted on a long stalk, and at the junction of this stalk with the branch grow two greenish-white figs of a faintly sweet taste. To many Indian birds *pipal*-figs form an irresistible attraction; and when the tree is in fruit, its branches shake all day, as the green pigeons, dog-headed barbets, bulbuls, parrots, mynas, and crows hop and flutter from twig to twig, enjoying to the full the feast spread for them by the generous hands of Nature.

Among the birds, but unheeded by them, the little striped palm-squirrels run along the branches destroying ten figs in wanton glee for every one they think of eating. The ground is strewn with the ripe fruit thrown down by the busy company overhead, and the servants' children, tiny brown gnomes, spend hours crouched in the shade picking up the fallen harvest.

At night the great fruit-eating bats sail towards the tree on their noiseless wings, and keep up a hideous carnival until dawn silences the revellers and sends them flapping to some secluded tamarind-trees among whose shady branches they hang in rows to sleep the day away, with occasional bouts of bickering. A line of bamboos carries the boundary of the garden from the *pipal*-tree along the river-bank. As it trends away landwards, these give way to tamarinds, *neems*, and *shishams* with an undergrowth of lime and *karounda* bushes. A square green lawn, secluded from observation by poincianas and a few casuarinas whose needle-like leaves make an end-

less sighing in the breeze, not unlike the beating of surf on a distant shore, occupies the space between the *pipal* and the *chabutra*, or low masonry platform, lying a few yards from the house.

The front gate is shaded by Millingtonias. Their gray fluted stems rise straight up from the ground like the pillars of an ancient temple, and their branches and leaves intermingle to form a natural archway over the gate. To the left of the Millingtonias is a small grove of mango-trees, while a second lawn in front of the house has its surface pleasantly lighted up by bright leaved crotons and poinsettias, and its borders made rich with verbenas, nasturtiums, pansies, and other annuals that bloom freely here in the delightful cold weather.

There is a drive round the lawn, and along its sides are planted oleanders, both pink and white, the hibiscus, and the boxwood-tree with its profusion of orange-like blossoms, while close to the veranda a pucca aloe, or Adam's Needle, raises its magnificent raceme of ivory-white, honey-laden bells to view. On one side of the house there are some fine rose-trees, while the remaining side is flanked by an open space of grass-land which separates the servants' quarters from the house.

Birds are welcome to this garden of mine, and they like it all the better for its being old and somewhat grown to tangle and brushwood in parts. These quiet nooks, where the wild jujube throws its prickly arms around the purple-flowered bauhina, where the ground is white with the heavy scented blossoms of the Harsinghar, and the lentena-bushes from thickets six feet deep, are never touched by the hand of man, being sacred to the little Indian robin and *dayal*-bird, and it is among their shadows that the chestnut-winged crow-pheasant creeps away to roost.

Stretched on an easy chair in my veranda I am able, myself unnoticed, to study the ways and manners of the timid inhabitants of the garden. A fine drizzling rain is falling, and, with the exception of a flock of Alexandrine parakeets, there is no bird-life to be seen at the moment.

The parrots do not seem to mind the rain. They fly to and fro over the lawn, and hover over a *neem*-tree among whose dripping branches they appear to be enjoying themselves. Hanging by beak or claws they swing from one swaying twig to another, amid much fluttering of wings, and noise of shrieks, and screams. They are handsome birds with large powerful bills, and are very different from the common rose-ringed parakeet. As I watch them, one flies past, quite close to me, a living gem with a beak of red coral. He turns from side to side as he darts across the lawn, showing now the yellow undercovers of his wings, and now the glossy green of his back and the maroon-red patches on his shoulders. In a moment he has alighted upon a *casuarina*-tree. Another and another bird follow him, and then groups of twos and threes, till soon the tree seems to be alive with them. For some time an animated discussion is kept up, when, with a premonitory scream and a whirr of wings, the whole party dash across the lawn, wheel at full speed round the *pipal* and are gone. They are on a marauding expedition, and after a long detour will drop this time silently into the neighboring guavatope and work destruction there.

The rain has stopped, and a flood of golden light pours through a break in the gray wall of clouds. Here and there the grass glistens as if set with diamonds, and each passing gust of wind sends a shower from the dripping leaves. A shadow crosses the lawn; I look up and see the tawny eagle.

Poised on broad motionless wings, he seems to halt or move by will-power alone. He turns his head from side to side, scanning the wold with his fierce eyes. His yellow claws are tightly closed, but they are ready to open, should his keen sight detect an errant duckling or a wandering chicken. My servants hate him, and, regarding him as a bad character, urge upon me his immediate destruction. He is known to them as the *laggar-bagga* or hyæna, and they never weary of recounting tales of his boldness, ferocity, and unprincipled conduct in connection with the poultry-yard. But freelance and marauder though he be, I cannot find it in my heart to slay him. What though his cruel talons are dyed with the blood of many victims, to me he is the monarch of the air. There is that in his bold eye and fierce bearing that wakens thoughts of mailed knights, and the grinding of steel on steel, and the pomp and parade of the old days of chivalry. And how grand his swoop through the air! What hunter among men has experienced such a sensation as his headlong dive through space? No, so far as I am concerned, he shall remain the ruler of his airy kingdom.

Among the dry leaves of the bamboos the babblers are settling a quarrel. The combatants are two in number. They are lying on the ground with yellow claws interlaced and white eyes blazing with fury, as they aim fierce blows at each other. Round them the remainder of the tribe have formed a ring. The interest taken in the fight is almost human. The spectators, with their feathers puffed out until they look like balls of brown fluff on golden wires, dance about in a state of high excitement. They squeal their approval or displeasure at the varying turns of the conflict; but they do nothing to interfere with the combatants.

Suddenly the bulbuls in the *lentenabushes* change their twittering discus-

sions to a harsh note of alarm. In a moment the babblers become silent. The combatants unlock their claws, and the whole crew flutter away into the bamboo twigs. The red-headed merlin (*turumti*) has glided past on his pointed gray wings. From his stronghold among the acacia thorns he has heard the uproar, and has come to see what booty he can snatch in the midst of it. As he skims over the bushes not a little bird is to be seen, and, beyond that first rasping note of alarm, there is not a sound to be heard.

Some distance from the babblers a pair of hoopoes are feeding on the ground, with their slender curved bills busily searching every tiny crevice in which an insect can hide. As they pass each other they often indulge in quaint gestures, ducking and bobbing their heads, raising and depressing their crests as they do so, and uttering a low grating sound quite unlike their usual note. At last one flies away to a neighboring mango-tree, and, hidden among its leaves, repeats a plaintive "oop-ooop-ooop," at intervals. Deaf to its companion's calls the remaining bird continues to feed on the ground and slowly approaches an ominous-looking hole close to where the *mali* (gardener) has stacked some empty flowerpots. There is something moving in this hole, but the bird, busy on a feast of squirming white ants, fails to see it. The creature concealed in the hole is apparently in a state of great excitement, and when the unwitting bird approaches to within eighteen inches of its hiding-place, it flashes out into the light. The startled hoopoo has barely time to do more than half open its wings and utter a squeak of terror; the next moment a serpent's fangs are buried in its breast, and one or two merciless coils are thrown round its helpless body. As the hoopoo flutters in its death-struggles, the silent bushes become once more alive with all the small

birds of the garden. They form a crowd around the serpent and his victim, chattering and screaming their detestation of the loathsome reptile, but keeping at a safe distance from him. The snake, heedless of the voice of public opinion, moves his head slowly over the body of his victim and proceeds methodically to make arrangements for swallowing his dinner. At this moment Nemesis, in the shape of myself, armed with a thick stick, intervenes. Without doubt the serpent is not to blame in satisfying the cravings of a nature that has been given to him; but there is no knowing when in a fit of vicious rage he might try the temper of his fangs upon my *mali's* bare feet as he crouches, hoe in hand, among the grass and weeds, making vain attempts to keep their luxuriant growth within bounds. So without further scruples the stick descends, and the snake dies. A truly hideous object is he to look at when laid out for inspection in my veranda. His body is short and thick, and covered with markings like those of a rock-snake or python. His eyes are deep-sunk and dull, his head broad and flat, and his jaws are armed with two rows of fine curved teeth. "Avoid me" seems to be written in the criminal expression of his sullen countenance.

In ten minutes' time the tragedy was over and forgotten, and the flow of bird-life in the garden resumed its usual course. The oriole (*pilak*) clad in black and yellow darted into the very tree that shaded the spot where the hoopoo had been killed, and made the garden resound to the flute-like tones of his voice.

I turned aside and walked among the rose-bushes, listening to the harsh grating notes of the tree-pies that were chasing each other through the mango-grove; sometimes they uttered a curlous metallic note not unlike the plash made by a small pebble dropped into a

still pool from a great height. The tree-pie is a graceful bird; its wings are short and rounded, and its tail long and graduated; the head and neck are a sooty brown, and the back a reddish buff; the wings have each a pale gray bar, and the feathers of the tail are gray tipped with black. He is a graceful bird, as I have said, but I regret to add that his character is not in accordance with his appearance. While he frolics with what seems innocent glee among the mango-leaves, his mind is full of plans boding no good to the white eggs that the silly brown dove has left on a small platform of twigs in the *babul*-bush. It is entertaining to watch his cautious movements as he reconnoitres the approaches to your dwelling, and enters your veranda. He is partial to small cage-birds, and takes a mischievous delight in pulling their heads off their shoulders. I remember a friend of mine lamenting the diminishing number of some red wax-bills known in India as *lals*, that she possessed. She had about a dozen of these tiny red-speckled finches, and kept them in a wicker-cage in her bedroom. For some time they lived in security and peace, and gave delight to their kind mistress. But one day an inquisitive tree-pie alighted on the window-sill, and peered sideways into the room with his wicked brown eye. What he saw encouraged him to make closer investigations. He entered the room and perched upon the cage. The little birds were frightened and fluttered about wildly, but he bided his time till at last one of them fluttered into his pincer-like bill and met its fate. He tore off its head and retired noiselessly to devour the dainty at his leisure, amidst the fronds of the *Poinciana*-tree. The lady came in, went to talk to her sweet birds, and found to her astonishment and horror that one of them had died a mysterious death. Little did she think as she heard the

note of the tree-pie that this dark deed had been done by him. The pie repeated his stealthy visits day after day. No matter where the cage was hung he succeeded in discovering it, and, taking advantage of moments when the room was empty, he entered and destroyed one or two of the wretched finches. One day, however, the *ayah* was left to watch the cage. The pie looked in as usual at the window. He saw something that appeared to be a bundle of white clothes in the room, but it did not move, and this reassured him. After much peering and craning of his neck in different directions, he apparently came to the conclusion that no danger was to be apprehended from the suspicious-looking bundle. There were only three finches left now, and delay had sharpened the murderer's appetite. With a low "chink" he entered the room and alighted softly upon the cage. The next moment the bundle of white clothes had jumped up and shut the window. There was no escape. The exasperated lady and her husband were called, and the pie was shown no mercy; a well-aimed blow with a tennis-racket put an end forever to the career of this ornithological Jack-the-Ripper.

By this time the pies have fluttered from tree to tree out of sight, and for a moment their harsh voices are still. Up in the Millingtonia, over the gate, a crested bird is sitting. Its form is delicate; its head and wings are black; each wing bears a white spot, and the whole undersurface is white. From its throat comes a ringing note, wild, musical, and clear. It is answered from afar off, and the bird, spreading its round wings, floats into the air. It is soon followed by two or three others, whose cries are shorter and pitched in a lower key, the whole forming a sort of song and chorus. These birds are the crested cuckoo and her lovers. She is fond of admira-

tion, a flirt to her feather-tips, and leads her cavaliers a wild chase from tree to tree and grove to grove before she makes her choice.

The courtship of many Indian birds is a very formal matter, and greatly different from the wild screaming chase of the crested cuckoos. This is well exemplified in the probation the Indian Roller, or jay, as he is styled in India, has to undergo before he can find a wife for himself. The jay is a bird of very brilliant plumage when his wings are expanded, though when perched on the stump of a tree, or upon a clod of earth in a newly-ploughed field, his feathers appear to harmonize very closely with the subdued tone of his surroundings. His wings are of a light cerulean blue with a band of darker blue across the quill-feathers; his neck and breast are of a reddish brown, and the under parts a dull greenish blue. His wings are both broad and long, and although he usually proceeds at a leisurely rate, he is capable of darting aside, or up or down at lightning speed. He, alone of the birds in my garden, appears to have studied the art of dancing in the air. His antics are seen to perfection in the months of March and April, when his "fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." The young jay, upon whom he has set his affections, takes up her station on the top branch of some convenient tree and utters an encouraging cluck. Her Romeo responds with an ecstatic chuckle and launches himself into the air. He makes a long sweep, flapping his wings slowly as he goes, and uttering cries that develop gradually from the hoarse subdued notes of love to shrill long-drawn screams of frenzied passion. Higher and higher rise his utterances as he mounts the air, until he is poised far above his lady-love, a gleaming speck of lapis-lazuli in the rich sunlight of the spring morning. His head points straight up

to the sky, and his wings are half expanded. As for a few moments he remains floating silently in this attitude, the bright colors of his plumage are fully displayed; his eye gleams like a speck of fire and his bill like a streak of silver. But now hope seems to desert him, and with it he appears to lose all strength and animation. His brilliant wings close, and in silence he drops like a plummet from the height to which he has attained. As he approaches the level of the trees he again expands his wings, and, with low grating chuckles, returns swiftly to his Juliet, who greets him with clucks of admiration and pride. Once alighted close to the female bird, he raises his half-expanded wings and ducks his head several times towards her, as if making profound bows, accompanying this ceremony with grating screams in which she often joins. Again and again the jay darts forth from the dewy leaves of the *Millingtonia* to perform the mazy dance that at last wins him the reward of his devoted admiration.

From the noisy jay it is a relief to turn the eye towards the orange umbels and purple berries of the *lentenabushes*, where the bulbuls keep up a constant twittering. Their liquid note is pleasant to hear, and they seem always to have a good deal to discuss, especially as evening comes on. Among natives the bulbul is often caged and kept for fighting, as these little birds are very pugnacious. It is easily tamed, and may sometimes be seen fastened by one leg to a crutch-handled perch which its master carries with him when he goes for an evening walk. There are many varieties of bulbuls, some being birds of gorgeous plumage; but the one found here is a little brown bird known as the red-vented, or common Bengal bulbul.

Another bird that attracts attention from its numbers and vivacity is the

drongo shrike, known familiarly in India as the king-crow. The name is somewhat misleading, for he is not a crow, nor does he associate with the members of the crow tribe, to whom he bears a mortal hatred. He may often be seen pursuing a crow with great vigor and impetuosity from the vicinity of his perch. The crow, although so much larger and more powerful, invariably yields before the fiery attacks of the little *drongo*, and beats an ignominious retreat. King-crows are naturally pugnacious birds, and this trait in their character becomes developed to an extraordinary degree during the breeding-season, at which period it is not against crows only that they wage war; any intruder on their domains is at once attacked, and generally, be it said, forced to retire, if only to escape from the discordant cries with which the birds accompany the fierce swoops they make at his head and eyes. To judge from their numbers, the *drongos* are very successful in the struggle for existence. There is no tree in the garden without one or more of them perched on some bare twigs, watching with keen black eye for the slightest movement that may betray the whereabouts of some unsuspecting insect. Even out in the neighboring fields their blue-black bodies may be seen riding on the backs of the cattle and goats. Every now and then one of them takes a short flight from its living perch to snap up a fly or grasshopper. In the middle of the grass-plot in front of my house there stands a bush with glossy dark-green leaves and beautiful white wax-like flowers not unlike camellias in appearance. It has no English name, and its scientific appellation is so long that I fear to write it; however, let the blame rest with the ingenious botanist that composed it; it is *Tabernaemontana coronaria*. Among the shining leaves of this tree sit a mother *drongo* and her

two nearly fledged young ones. She is teaching them to kill. They sit and watch her dart across the velvety green grass, as a cabbage-butterfly flickers past on his way from the oleanders to the white clusters of the boxwood-flowers, hailing her return with chirps of delight, and crowding round her with raised trembling wings and gaping red throats. Soon there is nothing left of the beautiful fly but its wings, which are discarded and fall fluttering to the ground, mute witnesses of the destruction done by these birds in the ranks of insect-life. The young *drongos* have keen appetites, and their constant appeals urge the poor mother to renewed exertions. She makes flight after flight, watched greedily by her hungry brood, and rarely does she return without something for one of them. At last hunger proves too much for even this most loving of mothers, and with another large butterfly in her bill she attempts to gain the cover of the neem-tree without being seen by her offspring. But her children take too keen a personal interest in her movements to allow any hope of success. As she alights on the branch she has chosen, they tumble up after her, and by dint of squeals, fluttering wings, and gaping mouths—which are the pleading ways of baby birds—they persuade the poor mother to yield up the morsel to them. The scene is touching, and it also affords food for reflection, for here is evidently a high order of intelligence; a struggle has taken place in the bird's mind between the desire to appease her own pressing wants and love for her young, and the purer impulse has gained the day.

Flying busily from their nest under the eaves to the short grass on the lawn are a pair of common mynas. They are, in truth, handsome birds, with their golden bills, black heads, and brown bodies, and if they were not so widely distributed they would at-

attract more attention than they do. As it is, few people think of studying the ways and manners of this clever and interesting bird; yet with those who know him the myna is a favorite, ranking deservedly as one of the most intelligent and amusing of feathered pets. It must be admitted that his voice is harsh and grating, a failing common to many Indian birds, and that he has the human frailty of being fond of elevating it; but his cheery friendly ways make up for this, and the specific title of *tristis* must, in his case, be held to apply to the sober color of his plumage alone. Mynas, in a state of nature, live very largely upon insects, but as young birds they can be easily brought up on a paste made of parched gram-flour and water; an occasional grasshopper added to the somewhat insipid fare will be found to keep them in perfect health.

They are a wide-spread family, and four separate branches of them live in and around my garden. Just beyond the silent creek, underneath the *pipal*-tree, some men are engaged in ploughing the *diara*, or river-bed land. At the tail of the plough hurries a mob of slate-gray birds with whitish patches on their wings, jostling and pushing each other in their eager scramble for the grubs and worms that are turned up every now and then. These are the bank-mynas, so called from their habit of building their nests in the holes of mud-banks. Feeding near them are some black and white pied birds, called by natives *ablak*-mynas. These birds have a sweet trilling note, and are sometimes seen kept in cages. Somewhat apart from them are the Pagoda mynas, small dove-gray birds with ruddy salmon-colored breasts and long pendent black crests; very handsome they are, and have a faint sweet warble of their own. During the winter months these resident mynas are visited by hordes of starlings that pay

particular attention to the grain crops, and also by large numbers of the rose-pastor, one of the most beautiful members of this family. This bird arrives here towards the end of the cold weather, and devotes itself to the mulberries and the flowers of the bombax, or great silk cotton-tree. One of these majestic trees, with its white leafless branches thrust out at right angles to its buttressed trunk, its profusion of deep red flowers, each measuring nearly three inches across, and its swarms of chattering mynas, forms an impressive picture of tropical life.

From the mynas my attention was drawn once more to the *pipal*-tree by the sound of a peculiar whistling coo; if once heard this can never be forgotten, but it is impossible to give a close description of the sound. It is the call of the green pigeons. A *pipal*-tree in fruit is an irresistible attraction to these birds, and from the way in which the smaller branches are shaking it is plain they are busy at it now. The outer toe of the green pigeon's foot is reversible, and this gives it great power in grasping, so that it climbs and crawls about the branches and twigs with almost as much ease as the parrots themselves. Every now and again one of them flutters out from the leaves, singing in the air as it circles round the tree. The beautiful tints of the green pigeon harmonize perfectly with the foliage of the trees, and unless betrayed by an incautious whistle, or when feeding or moving about, a flock of these birds might be seated within a few feet of one without being detected. The Hindustani name of this bird is *hurrial* or *huriril*, and there is a belief that it never descends to the ground, being supposed to quench its thirst by flying low over the surface of pools or rivers, and taking mouthfuls as it goes. This remarkable belief has originated, no doubt, in the frugivorous habits of the bird,

which, unlike the blue-rock, does not need to come to the earth to obtain its food. So far as I have been able to ascertain it has never been definitely proved that these birds do descend to the ground.

By this time the sun has come well out, and has enticed the crow-pheasant from his retreat in the jujube bushes to the middle of the lawn. The name by which this bird is commonly known in India is completely misleading. The bird is neither a crow nor a pheasant, nor a cross between a crow and a pheasant, if such a creature were possible. He is a member of the cuckoo family, and belongs to that section of it known as the ground-cuckoos; but unlike many of his connections, his domestic affairs are managed with great decency and propriety. For the last half hour he has been hooting dismally in his thicket, but now appears to be restored to good-humor, and stalks about among the glistening spikes of the grass and tiny wild plants in a very majestic manner, his copper-colored wings forming a striking contrast to his coal-black body and tail. He frequently interrupts his stately promenade to make a dart forward at a grasshopper or beetle, expanding his round wings as he does so to balance himself. His powers of flight are feeble, and when alarmed he takes himself off with great expenditure of energy and a poor return in speed, making, as a rule, for the nearest tree, and alighting all of a heap on one of its lowest boughs. From here he progresses in a succession of vigorous hops until he gains the top of the tree, when he launches himself into the air once more, and by dint of desperate flapping contrives to reach the next tree about ten yards off, and so makes his escape. He is a bird adapted by nature to live in brushwood and tangle, and his powers of locomotion are not to be estimated by

his performances on the wing. There are few birds that can rival the ease and speed with which he makes his way through the thickest undergrowth. The crow-pheasant (the name has become sanctified by long usage, and is more manageable than chestnut-winged ground-cuckoo) is in his way a benefactor to the human race, and ought to be regarded by mankind with feelings of friendly interest. He lives upon scorpions, centipedes, and small snakes, besides beetles and grasshoppers. This is a bill of fare that does not perhaps recommend the bird as quite suitable for a household-pet, but it marks him out as a creature to be encouraged about the garden; for there is no Indian garden, however well kept it may be, but contains its host of noisome reptiles and insects. If left alone the crow-pheasant becomes very tame, and will frequently show himself in the full glory of his striking plumage, stalking across the lawns, or promenading in the shadow of the *mehndi*-hedge.

There is yet another member of the cuckoo family in my garden whose acquaintance it is impossible to avoid making, his claims to attention being enforced by the possession of a powerful voice. During the hot weather the fires of love develop the vocal powers of this little creature to what might fairly be called an alarming extent, and from sunrise to sunset, and often at night, every garden and grove in the North-Western Provinces rings with his amorous complaints. At other seasons of the year, the bird is but rarely heard, and seldom seen. One of them has now taken up a position in the *neem*-tree near the gate. It is very difficult to see him; his gray mottled plumage so closely resembles the color of the bough he has chosen as his resting-place, that he is practically indistinguishable from it; his voice also seems to come from everywhere at once, and

forms a puzzling factor in the search. To add to this, he has a vexatious habit of suddenly falling silent and flitting away, and it is not until his shrill piping is heard at the other end of the garden that we know he has eluded our search. He begins his chant low down in the scale. At first it is a wild laugh, "ha-ha, ha-ha, ha-ha," each pair of syllables rising in a carefully graduated *crescendo*; this is followed by a refrain, "brain-fever, brain-fever, brain-fever," from the monotonous repetition of which he has received the well-chosen name of the brain-fever bird.

Looked at from a moral point of view, the brain-fever bird is an impostor. His whole life is devoted to hypocrisy. He clothes himself in the garments of a hawk, and when he flits across the garden in his noiseless way, there is a hurry and scurry among all the small birds that are out. The babblers scream together, and the bulbuls all twitter in alarm; the *thamnobia* dives into the thicket, and the purple sun-birds dart away from the golden bells of the alamanda. But he, the cause of this alarm, is himself filled with dread. He looks neither to the right nor to the left, but with his head tucked into his shoulders, hastens on his way to the friendly shelter of the Millingtonias. He hopes the crows have not seen him, for they, who know all things, have probed the secret of the mottlings on his soft plumage. To them he is a base cuckoo,—a cowardly feeble thing made to flout at; and so he scuttles along in mortal fear, from tree to tree, and the crows laugh at him. The brain-fever bird, or, as it is called by ornithologists, the hawk-cuckoo, shows a decided partiality for the nests of the babblers, on whom it fathers its young with unfailing success. It is a pitiful, and at the same time ludicrous, sight to watch a pair of babblers devoting their time to feeding a hulking youngster of twice their size. The foster-

parents seem quite proud of their giant baby; but what a pang it must be to them when one sunny morning he darts away with that noiseless cuckoo-flight of his, and takes no further notice of the kindly, if garrulous, folk among whom he spent the helpless days of his infancy.

The crows are cawing fitfully, while they sit on the roof of the cook-house, as if passing remarks in a listless way on things in general. At last the door opens, and the old *bawarchi* (cook) appears with a platter. He throws the contents on the ground; immediately the crows descend in a black cloud, and in a few moments not a scrap is left. Crows are not fastidious, and consequently they rarely go hungry. From the scraps thrown to them by the *bawarchi* they will go with equal zest to pillage the guava-tope with the parrots, or feast with the green pigeons and barbets on the *pipal*-figs, or, assuming the garb of innocence, they will glean among the fields with the blue-rocks and mynas. They will even be found disputing the possession of a rubbish heap with that *chiffonier* among birds, the Egyptian vulture, or assisting the Adjutant cranes and black vultures to celebrate the obsequies of a dead Hindu. Hence it is that the crow goes to roost with the firm conviction that the next day will bring him a full meal. Crows are as much at home in the reeking lanes of a bazaar as they are in the more savory boundaries of Indian gardens. They sit on the eaves of the fat *bunnyah's*, or graindealer's shop, peering down every now and then, till the greasy owner happens to turn away. Seizing their opportunity they swoop down in a moment upon the baskets of *lauca* (pop-corn), wheat, barley-flour, and other good things, and swallow big mouthfuls as fast as they can. At length the *bunnyah* turns round to discover the burglarious attempts being

made on his supplies. He aims wild blows at the daring robbers, but they dart away untouched, and caw jeeringly at him from the housetops. Sometimes the limits of even the patient *bunyah's* endurance are reached; what with sacred bulls, beggars, and bad debts he feels that, if any profit is to be made out of his business, he must strike a bold stroke. It is, however, against the precepts of his religion to deprive any creature of its life. Yet there is a way out of the difficulty. He persuades a friend to shoot a crow for him, and hangs the dead body by one leg in front of his shop. From this moment he is quit of his tormentors, for as long as a single tail-feather of their martyred brother remains fluttering in their view, so long is the shop taboo to the crow-community.

Had the estimable Professor Germinus applied to the life-history of the crow that same powerful mental lens through which he studied the character of the melancholy Dane, he would doubtless have discovered the reason why these birds have held their own so well in the struggle for existence. The crow possesses to a marked degree those two qualifications cynically supposed to be essential to success in life, a good digestion and no conscience. He is suitably clothed in black, and his character, unlike that of the tree-pie, is quite in accordance with his livery.

The dominion of the crows about the cook-house and the stables is disputed by the common, or *pariah*, kite. This bird, fitted by nature for a nobler life, has become to a large extent a parasite on man, and has lost much of its courage and fierceness, while it has gained in cunning and dexterity. The *pariah* kite has become so accustomed to the presence of human beings that it has been noticed hovering over the crowded platforms of large railway-stations, on the watch for the open

trays and baskets in which the native vendors of sweets and cooked meats hawk their wares, and often making good its swift dashes at them. When the monsoons burst, and the low-lying rice fields are turned into swamps, the kite spends hours circling over these wastes of shallow water, watching for frogs, to which he is very partial. I have often seen him flapping heavily away to some tall tree, bearing in his claws a wailing frog, which he proceeds to devour with callous indifference to the fact that it is still alive.

At dusk, when the crows fly in long lines to their roosting-places and the voices of jay and myna are hushed, the little owl flits from his nest in the chimney top and sits under the white blooms and long green leaves of the *gulachin*. A quaint little bird is he, and worthy of notice, as he sits there surveying the fading landscape through his large dreamy eyes, calling to mind, in a comical way, the globular face and rotund figure of the immortal Mr. Pickwick. He is not a purely nocturnal bird; a cloudy day will tempt him out of his retreat, for it is only the bright sunshine that seems to dazzle him.

There are many more birds in my garden whose appearance and ways the limits of this sketch prevent me from describing. The pond-heron has just swung down from the bamboo tops to his lonely vigil on the oozy margin of the creek. The bee-eaters are flashing golden green in the rays of the setting sun as they dart across the grass in eager pursuit of moths. The daurian swallow skims past the veranda, and the copper-smith sounds his metallic note from the topmost bough of the giant *pipal*. The *sirkeer* gazes inquisitively at me from a gap in the *mehndi*-hedge, and as I turn with unwilling step to enter my house, I hear the shrill laugh of the golden-backed woodpecker ringing through the air.

G. A. Levett-Yeats.

CONSTANCE.*

BY TH. BENTZON (*Mme. Blanc*).

Translated for The Living Age by Mrs. E. W. Latimer.

CHAPTER XV.

After the great race called the Grand Prix, which marks the time when "high society" in Paris goes to the country, Mme. de Latour-Ambert transferred herself and her five o'clock teas to Saint-Germain. A few belated men were still assiduous visitors. Among them was one distinguished by his punctuality, and by his zeal in executing the little commissions of the two ladies. He was a young man whom the baroness took every opportunity of praising to her goddaughter, commenting upon his handsome person, extolling his excellent social position and his future prospects; for, as she said, he had the certainty of promotion without ever leaving Paris. He was, besides, a youth who put his theories of right and wrong into practice, which was becoming more and more rare among fashionable young men.

Constance never contradicted her godmother, though she felt astonished at her persistence in dwelling on the merits of M. Julien des Rivoires, and even making her acquainted with the most intimate details of his religious life.

But when Mme. de Latour-Ambert began, in the positive tone she would have used in treating of some affair of ordinary interest, to tell her that this young man, realizing all the beauty of the qualities he had been admiring for two months past, aspired to make Mlle. Vidal Mme. des Rivoires, Constance gave a sudden cry, and made a gesture of dissent

which altogether amazed her godmother.

"*Mon Dieu!* what can you say against him?"

"Nothing."

"Then perhaps in time he may make himself agreeable to you?"

"Oh, never!"

"Must I tell him to give up all hope?"

"Absolutely."

"You will not find it easy to receive another offer so good," said the baroness, with an air of annoyance.

"I don't care,—I have no wish for marriage."

"Which signifies," thought Mme. de Latour-Ambert, putting together certain observations she had been making since the girl's arrival, "which signifies that she loves some one who cannot marry her."

She thought it very impertinent and very ungrateful on the part of Constance to refuse to be happy in the way laid out for her by her beneficent fairy godmother. As for M. de Latour-Ambert, he approved the girl's refusal. Nothing pleased him more than a sudden check to the schemes and wishes of young men; he had never been able to give up his place in life to them with any complacency. But he agreed with his wife in heartily disliking the unexpected arrival of Dr. Vidal, who came suddenly, like the statue of the commander in "Don Juan," to carry off his daughter. He was not able, he said, to do without her any longer; besides, Henriette Duranton was resolved that she would not be married until her cousin came back to

be her bridesmaid, and they could not keep two impatient lovers waiting any longer.

Everything about this messenger of ill tidings was displeasing to the De Latour-Amberts,—his free speech, his familiar manners, his southern accent, his exuberant good spirits, and a certain roughness which was not without a mixture of dignity.

"And how," thought the former Mlle. Marie de Varde, "could Marguerite have married this man and not have died afterwards of mortification! She idealized him along with all else in this ill-matched union! The praises of him with which her letters were always filled prove that she never saw him as he is."

But it was Mme. de Latour-Ambert who was herself short-sighted, since she could not see under its somewhat rugged husk the real superiority of this man of science and of heart who had, in his wife's eyes, the merit greater than all others, of being the father of her child. As to the doctor, he found the imperious Marie exactly like the portrait drawn of her by M. Duranton, but, like all happy people, he felt great indulgence for every one in the world, including this lady. His joy in seeing his child, from whom it had cost him much to part, was only equalled by the joy of Constance, when she found herself in his arms.

"Thou art prettier than ever," he said, with that tender *tutoiement* which in France marks nearness and affection. "I don't know whether it is due to thy godmother, but there is something about thee that there never was before, something that makes thee still more like thy mother."

It was true that she had become more refined in the cultivated circle into which she had been thrown, for she at once assimilated all that was rare and delicate.

"It would please him," she had said

to herself, thinking of M. de Glynne. "He would like to see me improved."

Of course they were never to meet again in this world; they could never in any case be anything more to each other than they were now; yet with touching inconsistency she tried to make herself more nearly his equal by acquiring the manners and the habits of good society. He would never know it, but she would have the happiness of feeling herself more worthy of him, more like what she fancied to be his ideal woman. It seemed a way of drawing nearer to him.

That her father should show his delight in what he called "*ses petits airs de grande dame*," those airs which he would once have laughed at, astonished her. All, indeed, seemed strange and inexplicable in the doctor's manner. She remembered how utterly cast down he had been when that sad departure of hers had taken place, which he had deemed necessary! Why did he appear so triumphant to-day? Why was he about to take her home without fear or apprehension, home where the same trial must await her? Unless indeed, M. de Glynne had left the Park forever. This thought greatly disturbed her, but she knew that it must be so. She dared not ask a question.

The baroness, whose suspicions had become certainties since the rejection of M. des Rivoires, was ready to open the dangerous subject frankly with the doctor. While Constance was reading as usual to the baron, she drew M. Vidal into the delightfully-kept little garden which enclosed the villa at Saint-Germain.

"Doctor," she said, with the courage of despair, "we are fully resolved, my husband and I, not to give you back your daughter. We need her too much in our old age."

"But, madam, how do you expect me to spend my old age without her?"

"Nothing prevents you from coming to Paris."

"Pardon me, all my interests are yonder, all my work lies there. I should find myself very much out of place if I were transplanted at this late day."

"Well then, if your work and your local interests count for so much in your existence, you would be less sensible of the loss caused you by Constance's temporary residence with us. Listen,—leave her to me part of the year at least. She will be our comfort now, and our heiress hereafter."

The doctor made a slight grimace.

"Many thanks,—but the dot that I can give her will be enough. Or even should I give her nothing," he added, with a peculiar smile, "I rather think she would have as good a chance of happiness."

"That is not speaking so seriously as a man ought to speak, permit me to tell you. You should love your child for her sake, not for yours."

"I fully agree with you, and that is why, while I heartily thank you for all your kindness, I am going to take my daughter home."

"So be it,—put your pearl under a bushel! Here we should have enhanced its value; she might very easily have made a satisfactory marriage."

"With us, also, madam, she may find—"

"I doubt, permit me to tell you, whether you can find a suitor equal to mine."

"Madam, is it not for her to decide that? Try to convince her—"

"Oh, I have, but up to the present she refuses him—"

"Well! what then?"

"I say, up to the present time. She must be left to forget and to reflect. In her interest I wanted to speak to you of this, between ourselves."

The baroness lowered her voice as

if, in the solitude of the garden, she might be overheard.

"Trust to the prudence and penetration of an old woman. She has refused him because down yonder she has left behind her some regrettable predilection—"

"Regrettable? Do you think so?"

"I am sure of it. We women are more clear-sighted than you are. She is madly in love with one of your neighbors."

"I have sometimes suspected it a little."

"Have you suspected who it may be?"

"There is only one person it could be."

"But—he is a married man—"

"Love does not always look so closely."

"What? You are saying to me now, monsieur, most astounding things. Into what madness may not that lead her?"

"My dear lady, it is only in cold blood we put such questions. Every one of us has a right to some share in the sunshine. So long as our young people stand in that light they look no further."

"You, a father, you reason thus?"

"I hope to make you see things as I do, but it is too soon now."

She could not bring him to say more than that, and, out of all patience with him, she spoke bitterly of selfish and imprudent affections.

"I could protect her against danger," she declared. "You will lead her back into it."

The doctor replied that he was far from ungrateful for her protection, and that he thanked her for it.

"But, *pardieu*, madam," he cried at last, "it would be paying too dear for your kindness if I were to make you a present of my daughter."

"I positively hate that man," said the baroness to her husband.

"*Ma foi!* I don't like him either," replied the baron, with the sulky look of a child about to be deprived of a favorite plaything. "Nobody will ever read to me like this little girl,—I shall have to fall back on you. And then she was so agreeable to look at, too."

"The rustic has had too much good fortune," resumed Mme. de Latour-Ambert, so much absorbed by her indignation against the doctor that she failed to remark how uncomplimentary her husband's speech was to herself; "a wife like my poor Marguerite, and a daughter like this one! Yes, it was too much for one man!"

She grew bitter against this favored one, because of her own poverty. She reproached him for lending her such a treasure, and then taking it away in so short a time.

"A month or two,—I will not ask for more," she pleaded.

"Madam, you still ask too much. I must take her home to-morrow, with your permission."

Then the baroness took her god-daughter aside and had a long conversation with her "for her good," warning her against the dangers of her enthusiastic nature, reminding her that life is not a novel, in short, proposing to leave M. des Rivoires not without hope, since she might change her mind after she had had time for reflection.

"It will be very easy," she said, "to keep him along with a little encouragement, for the poor fellow is so much in love that he would not give you up because of one refusal."

"Dear godmother, it is you I love, and for your sake I will come back some day," said Constance gently, hoping to cut short these importunate prayers.

She was indeed preoccupied by something very different from the void she was about to leave in the De Latour-Ambert household; what troubled her was the thought of the surprises at

home which might be awaiting her return to the Priory, for that there would be a surprise, her father had told her, with the air of satisfaction and mystery he had maintained ever since his arrival. She had not dared to question him, and both, as if to avoid the subject, talked a great deal more than they would otherwise have done about the approaching wedding of Henriette.

CHAPTER XVI.

As Constance crossed the porch at the Priory, she felt her heart fall her. To live there without hope of ever seeing him would indeed be painful! In Paris a thousand things had distracted her thoughts and drawn her out of herself, until she had escaped from absorption in those recollections which thenceforward were to be ever present with her whichever way she turned. These began by chasing away sleep from her couch on the very first night of her return. She bewildered herself with endless conjectures, hoping and fearing the news that Catinou could very well have told her at once; there was a sly look in Catinou's face that warned her of something, she knew not what. Only one question was necessary, but that one question Constance would not ask.

After a feverish and sleepless night, she rose early, opened her window and looked out toward the Park, as if she thought some message might come to her from there, borne on the first rays of the sun. The complete silence of the country, with all around the Priory asleep in the misty morning, seemed funereal and sad. The vague perfume of the autumn flowers, the sharp scent of dahlias and chrysanthemums, rose from the earth as she stood motionless at her window watching the scene. She stood there in a frame of climbing roses, with a white

shawl flung over her shoulders to shelter her from the morning air. Whom was she thus expecting? She did not know. But her attitude was one of expectation.

The leaves on the trees were turning red. Three months and more had passed since the midsummer evening which had put to flight love's sweet enchantment. She drew back with a shiver, closed the window, dressed herself, and then went down to join her father, who professed to be in a great hurry to have breakfast over that he might go and see if his patients had taken advantage of his absence to get better, as was their duty. The extreme gayety of the doctor jarred on Constance. As soon as he left her she went to her own room, and began to write to her godmother, as she had promised to do.

"Mademoiselle," said Catinou, outside her door, "somebody wants you down-stairs."

Somebody? Who was this somebody? One of the Durantons, perhaps? No, it was more probably some worthy country neighbor. Without making any haste, she went first into the dining-room, where such visits were generally received.

"Mademoiselle," said Catinou, "it is in monsieur's study."

Constance pushed open the door, and stood petrified on the threshold; a cry died on her lips, and she steadied herself with her hand against the wall.

He was there, he, Raoul de Glynne, seated in the easy-chair which the winter before they had called his, and with a happy air that she had never seen him have before.

"Stannie!" he cried, springing up.

And his low voice, full of emotion, gave a strange tenderness to that familiar household name by which he called her for the first time.

She raised her arms, as if warding off a phantom. A sort of torpor stole

over her, the torpor that creeps over our faculties when we dream we are in the presence of an inevitable catastrophe. She whispered to herself, "I must escape," but her feet seemed riveted to the spot, powerless to act for her. It was a dream,—it must be a dream,—inexplicable things were taking place without her being able to assist or hinder them. Raoul de Glynne had drawn near her, so near that he had taken both her hands in his and forced her with a sort of tender authority to sit down on the sofa. And now he was whispering in her ear, "Dear,—dear little girl,—if you knew how much I love you!"

She made a quick movement to escape from him. She was pale, stupefied, half wild with terror.

"Is it possible," he said, "that your father has told you nothing?"

And then as she shook her head:

"It depends on you whether we shall ever again need to be parted,—whether you will be my wife."

Yes, of course it was a dream, for this thing was not possible. But she tried to prolong the illusion, shutting her eyes and holding her breath in dread of awakening.

"Your wife?" she murmured faintly.

"But the other one?" asked the eyes that suddenly were raised to his with a look of anguish, "but what have you done with the other one?"

He understood the look and answered:

"I am free,—free to give you my name, free to love you till my latest breath, or else you would never have seen me again. I should have gone out of your path; I should have returned to the state of isolation to which I thought I had grown accustomed when we first met. Since that time what a change! I was so poor before that day. You have given me back everything. You have renewed my wish to be happy. In loving you I

seem to be obeying an order given me from Heaven. Do you understand? There are sometimes such singular coincidences that they make us believe that the events resulting from them have been decreed,—have been written down beforehand. Yes, it was decreed what should happen that first day when we met under the shady trees of the Garenne, when I saw you dawning in the distance, like the very image of happiness, passing swiftly, unattainable,—and yet,—that happiness I hold to be my own to-day. And oh! I will never let it escape from me!"

He pressed her to his heart in a transport of joy that no longer alarmed her, though as yet she understood nothing except that some miracle had taken place.

"Tell me that I was not deceiving myself, dearest, the day when I thought I saw,—with a mixture of despair and joy that seemed like madness,—the day when I dared to believe that you loved me."

Again she raised to his face the beautiful eyes that had been cast down while he spoke to her in that unknown strain of passion; a tear was his only answer, glittering like a diamond on her long black lashes. He kissed it away, and many caresses followed, which were only interrupted by the doctor's return.

He announced his coming from afar by humming an air to himself and calling loudly for Catinou; he opened and banged several doors, and in short, did not enter his study until he was sure he had left time enough for the re-establishment of decorum.

"Well," said he in his roughest voice, "are you sure that you are not still regretting the loss of the suitor proposed to you by your godmother, my little Stannie?"

And as she protested with a blush, he went on:

"There was a plot in progress, my dear neighbor, to keep this little girl in Paris, but that would not have suited me, nor you. I had hard work to keep from telling her what was in store for her on her return, but I refrained. I thought I ought to leave you the pleasure of surprising her. And you were surprised,—ah, Stannie! were you not, now?"

And so the dream proved all reality; she need no longer fear it would fade away. And yet she remained strangely disquieted and bewildered. There was something incredible in it all. How was it that the other wife had suddenly disappeared so precisely at the right moment? Did it not seem as if some murderous wish had killed her, as if fate had fulfilled the desire of hate? Constance felt a certain indefinable remorse, though assuredly she had never been guilty of this criminal wish, unless indeed, it had unconsciously suggested itself. Nevertheless she felt herself to be the cause of it.

The poor woman was still so young! Constance recalled her face as she had seen it three months before at the Salon, its forced gayety exchanged for sadness, and its expression of weariness. What had she been thinking of alone upon that bench? Perhaps how to prove to him that, after all, she was not the actress he had called her. Or perhaps she was meditating how she could make a second attempt on her own life, since the first had not succeeded.

The blood of Constance seemed to stagnate in her veins. It was but a flash of thought, yet in that flash it seemed to her that her father, and above all, Raoul, should have felt the same suspicion, and not have given way to this unfeeling joy, which took possession of her again in spite of all, which ended by mastering her, and leaving no room for pity, terror or any

other sentiment. What mattered all the rest? She was to be the wife of Raoul,—he had slipped on her finger an engagement ring,—he would never leave her,—never,—never. And her duty henceforth would be to see that he was the happiest of men. Was it possible that duty could be so sweet,—so intoxicatingly, temptingly sweet,—as sweet as sin itself is said to be to the wicked? Oh, how beautiful life was! How could there be people so blind, so ungrateful, so impious as to speak ill of it? Her heart overflowed like a full cup.

That evening, when the doctor, under various pretexts, had left them alone together, and she was seated beside Raoul in the twilight, her hand in his, her ears filled with his words of love, there came to her that wish which in tender souls accompanies the sense of an excess of happiness, the wish to set a seal upon this supreme page of life, an involuntary desire to die while nothing had yet marred such happiness. No one of us has ever reached such heights without feeling a frightful presentiment that sometime or other we must descend. Constance had this presentiment, which made her, with an impulse of terror, cast herself for refuge into the arms of her lover.

"Ah!" she said, "if this beautiful day, this day sent to us from Paradise, was to be our only day of happiness, we should still have to thank God for it."

"But all other days will be just like it, darling; there lies before us a long vista of such happy days, so long that I cannot see the end of it," replied Raoul, in a burst of boyish tenderness.

Then he began to laugh:

"And I fancied myself too old!"

The doctor dismissed him at last, not without some difficulty, under pretext that after a long journey and much violent emotion, people careful

of their health ought to take some rest; but before going to bed, Constance finished the letter to her god-mother, telling her what a clap of thunder had interrupted her as she was writing it, and repeating that she was happy, so happy! In truth she only wrote for the pleasure of repeating that word. It seemed to take on a new look as she wrote it, and to have a meaning that it had never had, she thought, for any one but her. The next day the two had little chance to be alone together, for all the Durantons came to wish joy to the future Mme. de Glynne.

"I told you," cried Henriette, "that you would end by marrying the prince."

Horace Capdevielle, who was himself on the eve of his marriage, seemed extremely proud of the approaching relationship; the pastor saw something providential in the return of his dear old Park to the family of its former owner. He had given up his prejudices against the man whom he had once accused of dreadful crimes; there should be mercy, he thought, for every sinner, and this one had reformed, so let bygones be bygones. Mme. Duranton herself deigned to smile on the engagement. She thought her niece was about to make an excellent marriage, and told her so, with many exhortations as to the duties and responsibilities incumbent upon those who possess the dangerous privileges of rank and riches.

"And you will go on living here?" demanded Henriette. "And you will leave us Stannie?"

"Most certainly," said M. de Glynne, who had taken part in what he called to himself "*un jour de corvée*," feeling sure that he could make up for it by what was to come after. "Nothing will be changed, except that an incorrigible pessimist will be reconciled to existence."

He made himself very agreeable, and at dinner had a long discussion with the pastor on Salluste du Bartas, whom, in his great enthusiasm for everything connected with Gascony, M. Duranton placed higher than Ronsard, insisting that from him Tasso and Milton had drawn their inspiration; in which opinion he said he was supported by Goethe, who had called Du Bartas the king of French poets. This impression was about all the pastor had ever gathered from the works of the German critic, his firm opinion being that no literature could equal that of the south of France.

M. de Glynne defended Ronsard just enough to enable his opponent to display his enthusiasm and to achieve a brilliant triumph. He would have been quite willing to have it proved to him that day was night; one thing only he cared for, the happy face of Constance, which his eyes seemed to devour. And Constance, while she returned his look of tenderness, thought now and then of the mysterious end of that poor woman so suddenly cut off, not long after she herself had seen her. This melancholy idea, which kept coming over her like a discordant refrain to her happiness, at last took such possession of her that as soon as the guests were gone she said abruptly to her father: "I want to know how Mme. de Glynne died?"

"How she died?" repeated the doctor, who was lighting his candle to go to bed. "Have you not yet spoken about it to each other?"

"No—that is to say—hardly. He told me he was free, but gave me no explanation, and from that moment I have not dared to tell him the fear that troubles me. You don't think, father—tell me—you don't think she killed herself—really killed herself—this time?"

The doctor began to laugh, but his laugh showed some embarrassment.

"Oh, well, if that is all that worries

you, you may make yourself easy. Has she really killed herself, you ask? Creatures of that sort never do. Come, come, you poor innocent! She has found consolation by this time, I wager. *Dame!* She may have been mortified for a moment to know that she had lost the right to bear a title and a name that was a distinguished one, but on the other hand, she has regained her liberty. I wager she has found plenty of new dupes. So much the worse for her and them. We have nothing more to do with her."

Constance had suddenly grown pale as death. In vain she tried to interrupt her father; a few words only came to her lips over and over again as he spoke, and she dared not conclude the sentence: "But in that case—in that case—"

"No—no—you may be quite reassured; the poisonous reptile is not dead,—though it is practically as good as dead," cried the doctor, "since a necessary law which had been omitted in our Code since 1816, has lately been revived, just at the very time we needed it."

Again Constance seemed to herself to dream, but this time the dream was a frightful nightmare. She shuddered as she remembered the words of the Abbé Eudes when he spoke against divorce: "Those who take advantage of this law separate themselves from the church, which can never give divorce her sanction."

"Father," she said, in a low voice, but with intense reproach in her accent, "you should have told me this."

"Why, I told you nothing,—neither that nor anything else. I left it all to De Glynne. What did you talk about yesterday while I had the discretion to leave you alone together?"

She blushed even to the roots of her hair.

"Of everything, father, except what was most essential."

"Do you think so?" said the doctor, carelessly. "He loves you, you love him, you love each other. That is the essential thing to my mind. I hope that no scruple of bigotry is going to make you hesitate, now?"

She made no answer, but stood with bowed head.

"Do you account it a crime in this unlucky man to have allowed himself to be bamboozled when he was quite young, by an artful adventuress?"

"Oh, certainly not."

"Do you imagine it is right to push the principle of the inviolability of the conjugal vow so far as to force a man to live with a being he must despise and who has treated him outrageously?"

"I do not dare judge in such grave matters, but I think that nothing can oblige a husband to keep up his relations with a wife who has set at naught all her duties to him."

"You understand, then, that they must be separated?"

Constance inclined her head with an air of sadness and doubt.

"Well, then," said the doctor, triumphantly, "it is now only necessary that three years should have elapsed since such a separation; then on the demand of one of the parties, the separation can be turned into a divorce. De Glynne had not made use of the new law because he did not care to make another marriage, but after the explanation that took place between us, he hastened to fulfil the necessary formalities."

"What explanation, father?"

"One that took place after your departure, which looked a good deal like a flight. This flight excited his suspicions. He came here, he implored me to tell him if in any way he had been the cause of it, if he had involuntarily offended you in any way, if he displeased you in any way. I did not betray you. I did not let him see the

truth, but I could but suppose he partly guessed it. If you knew with what emotion he told me, 'I am ready to leave this country at a word from her, but she can also, by one word, keep me here forever.' Upon my word, I was quite overcome. Then we discussed the question frankly. His openness pleased me,—I made inquiries; all I heard about him inspired me with fresh confidence and esteem. In short, as I knew your secret, for why else were you taken so suddenly ill?—as I was sure of your consent if I gave mine, I said yes, when he asked me, in all due form, to give him your hand, after the divorce had been obtained. What could be more simple?"

It was indeed terribly simple; all the complications were lodged in the soul of Constance. In a voice almost too low to be heard, she said:

"There has been a mistake. I must speak to M. de Glynne to-morrow."

"To-morrow? I do not know how you will find a chance. You forget that to-morrow is Henriette's wedding day."

"Then as soon as possible—yes—the sooner the better."

She seemed about to go, but he prevented her.

"Listen to me, Constance; we must have no childishness. I am your father, I wish you only your good. Don't spoil your future by the foolish obstinacy of a young girl. You like each other and the law is in your favor. It permits you to live for each other, in all honor and honesty, well and safely married, and to bring up your children in a good position in the eyes of every one. What matters to you the opinion of a retrograde party, people who persist in opposing this benefit which legislation has conferred upon our country, and by which other countries have long profited?"

"Oh, the opinion of the world would be nothing to us."

"Of course not. We live outside those colonies of fashion which you must yourself have perceived exercise too much difference in Paris. The only thing which could render the marriage of a divorced person unadvisable is the existence of children, a matter with which we have no concern. I hope my daughter is not so bound by foolish prejudices—well, I must speak plainly—as to look upon a marriage in church as the only kind of a marriage. See, Constance—"

"I think, father,—I feel that it is the only real marriage, morally speaking."

"But, you foolish child, if you were contented to be married only in church, you would be, in the eyes of the law, not married at all, and would have no legal rights as a married woman!"

"I should have the blessing of God. But that has nothing to do with the question; every body submits to the custom of the ceremony at the *Mairie*."

"Which you, on your part, seem to think very lightly of."

"No, it has its use, no doubt; it fixes the civil status of married persons, as the contract fixes that of their property."

"And this civil status is worth everything, it seems to me," said the doctor, lightly touching the cheek of his still arguing and persisting child. "What will you lack, when you have what satisfies your heart?"

"I want God's blessing," said Constance, gravely.

"God's blessing! One can see that you have been taking a plunge into the fires of intolerance while you have been visiting your godmother. The most exacting God could not ask more than the best intentions and all the good order and honesty possible in the affairs of life. Do you think, now, that a vow is not binding because it was not taken before a priest? That your husband, for lack of a few prayers said over you in Latin, will be

less likely to be faithful to you, that your union will be on a less firm basis?"

"I should have entire confidence in M. de Glynne, even if he had promised me nothing."

"That's right!"

"But an engagement over which religion does not preside is not real," resumed Constance, with inflexible obstinacy.

"Confound that baroness!" cried the doctor, wrathfully. "Had it not been for her your mother would have stayed a Huguenot; you would not to-day have been making puerile objections, and the nuptial benediction you think so much of would have been given you by your uncle Duranton."

"Does my uncle know?" asked Constance, quickly.

"Your uncle does not even know that M. de Glynne has been married. I did not think it necessary to ask the advice of any one."

"Mine especially?" said Constance, in a tone almost severe.

"Do you dare to say that you would have refused what you know you have wished for, what you wish for still, more than anything else?"

"Father," demanded the young girl, lifting with a trembling hand one of the chamber candles that had been burning on the table while the two stood talking in a state of agitation almost equal,—he, red with anger, she, pale as death,—"Father, do you think that mamma, my poor dear mamma, who hears us now—I have faith in that—would have been willing to marry you without that formality of a religious ceremony which seems to you so insignificant?"

"The situation is not at all the same," replied the doctor, more embarrassed than before. "It cost me so little,—we might argue till to-morrow without understanding each other," he added, breaking off the discussion.

"You don't know what you are saying. Go to bed; *La nuit porte conseil*."

He kissed her good-night on her forehead, but it seemed to him that the poor little pale face, with its drawn features, turned involuntarily away, as if to escape from that customary caress; he remembered suddenly a similar expression and movement on his wife's part, after a painful dispute concerning Constance's first communion, and he gave a long sigh as he thought of the abysses which this question of belief or disbelief may open between two beings who in all other

respects agree with and adore each other.

"The stronger," he thought, "usually gives in to the weaker, for compassion has something to do with it. But here the case is different. Natural instinct will interfere in the struggle. It will be our ally; it will make itself heard. She loves——"

He gave a laugh of defiance as he went to bed.

"Bah! let the black cassocks say what they will! Nature will have its own way in the end. Poor De Glynne will come out all right!"

(To be continued.)

GOD'S ALCHEMY.

How strange are nature's ways!

Her secrets deep,

That, while she seems to sleep,

Dark nights and cheerless days,

Cold, parching winds that sweep

Through shivering boughs across the mountain steep,

In Springtime's long and wearisome delays,

Prepare the treasure fragrant May will reap.

Dull earth and misty gloom

Do then prepare

The dewy perfume rare

And rainbow-tinted bloom

That Spring-time will declare;

While, in the swelling roots and branches bare,

The secret life is breaking wintry doom

To meet at last the sun's caressing care.

Then, won from storm and rain

In darkness cold,

Will joyously unfold

Eternity's refrain

Of loveliness untold.

Color and fragrance, sweet as time will hold.

Though deeper, sweeter beauty still remain

In timeless poems by the God enscrolled.

The Speaker.

A. Matheson.

STEPHANE MALLARME.*

I.

Stéphane Mallarmé was one of those who love literature too much to write it, except by fragments; in whom the desire of perfection brings its own defeat. With either more or less ambition he would have done more to achieve himself; he was always divided between an absolute aim at the absolute, that is, the unattainable, and a too logical disdain for the compromise by which, after all, literature is literature. Carry the theories of Mallarmé to a practical conclusion, multiply his powers in a direct ratio, and you have Wagner. It is his failure not to be Wagner. And, Wagner having existed, it was for him to be something more, to complete Wagner. Well, not being able to be that, it was a matter of sincere indifference to him whether he left one or two little, limited masterpieces of formal verse and prose, the more or the less. It was "the work" that he dreamed of, the new art, more than a new religion, whose precise form in the world he was never quite able to settle.

"*Un auteur difficile*," in the phrase of M. Catulle Mendès, it has always been to what he himself calls "a labyrinth illuminated by flowers" that Mallarmé has felt it due to their own dignity to invite his readers. To their own dignity, and also to his. Mallarmé was obscure, not so much because he wrote differently, as because he thought differently, from other people. His mind was elliptical, and, relying with undue confidence on the intelligence of his readers, he emphasized the effect of what was unlike other people in his mind, by resolutely ignoring even the

links of connection that did exist between them. Never having aimed at popularity, he never needed, as most writers need, to make the first advances. He made neither intrusion upon nor concession to, those who, after all, were not obliged to read him. And when he spoke, he considered it neither needful nor seemly to listen in order to hear whether he was heard. To the charge of obscurity he replied, with sufficient disdain, that there are many who do not know how to read,—except the newspaper, he adds, in one of those disconcerting, oddly-printed parentheses, which make his work, to those who rightly apprehend it, so full of wise limitations, so safe from hasty or seemingly final conclusions. No one in our time has more significantly vindicated the supreme right of the artist in the aristocracy of letters; wilfully, perhaps, not always wisely, but nobly, logically. Has not every artist shrunk from that making of himself "a motley to the view," that handing over of his naked soul to the laughter of the multitude? But who, in our time, has wrought so subtle a veil, shining on this side, where the few are, a thick cloud on the other, where are the many? The oracles have always had the wisdom to hide their secrets in the obscurity of many meanings, or of what has seemed meaningless; and might it not, after all, be the finest epitaph for a self-respecting man of letters to be able to say, even after the writing of many books: "I have kept my secret, I have not betrayed myself to the multitude?"

Yet to Mallarmé, certainly, there might be applied the significant warning of Rossetti:

"But woe to thee if once thou yield
Unto the act of doing nought."

One paragraph, and a part of another, in this essay, are reproduced from an article on Mallarmé's Divagations, in the Saturday Review of Jan. 30, 1897.

After a life of persistent devotion to literature, he has left enough poems to make a single small volume (less, certainly, than a hundred poems in all), a single volume of prose, a few pamphlets, and a prose translation of the poems of Poe. It is because among these there are masterpieces, poems which are among the most beautiful poems written in our time, prose which has all the subtlest qualities of prose, that, quitting the abstract point of view, we are forced to regret the fatal enchantments, fatal for him, of theories which are so greatly needed by others, so valuable for our instruction, if we are only a little careful in putting them into practice.

In estimating the significance of Stéphane Mallarmé, it is necessary to take into account not only his verse and prose, but, almost more than these, the Tuesdays of the Rue de Rome, in which he gave himself freely to more than one generation. No one who has ever climbed those four flights of stairs will have forgotten the narrow, homely interior, elegant with a sort of scrupulous Dutch comfort; the heavy, carved furniture, the tall clock, the portraits, Manet's, Whistler's, on the walls; the table on which the china bowl, odorous with tobacco, was pushed from hand to hand; above all, the rocking-chair, Mallarmé's, from which he would rise quietly, to stand leaning his elbow on the mantel-piece, while one hand, the hand which did not hold the cigarette, would sketch out one of those familiar gestures: "*un peu de prêtre, un peu de danseuse*" (in M. Rodenbach's admirable phrase), "*avec lesquels il avait l'air chaque fois d'entrer dans la conversation, comme on entre en scène.*" One of the best talkers of our time, he was, unlike most other fine talkers, harmonious with his own theories in giving no monologues, in allowing every liberty to his guests, to

the conversation; in his perfect readiness to follow the slightest indication, to embroider upon any frame, with any material presented to him. There would have been something almost of the challenge of the improvisatore in this easily moved alertness of mental attitude, had it not been for the singular gentleness with which Mallarmé's intelligence moved, in these considerable feats, with the half-apologetic negligence of the perfect acrobat. He seemed to be no more than brushing the dust off your own ideas, settling, arranging them a little, before he gave them back to you, surprisingly luminous. It was only afterwards that you realized how small had been your own part in the matter, as well as what it meant to have enlightened without dazzling you. But there was always the feeling of comradeship, the comradeship of a master, whom, while you were there at least, you did not question; and that very feeling lifted you, in your own estimation, nearer to art.

Invaluable, it seems to me, those Tuesdays must have been to the young men of two generations who have been making French literature; they were unique, certainly, in the experience of the young Englishman who was always so cordially received there, with so flattering a cordiality. Here was a house in which art, literature, was the very atmosphere, a religious atmosphere; and the master of the house, in his just a little solemn simplicity, a priest. I never heard the price of a book mentioned, or the number of thousand francs which a popular author has been paid for his last volume; here, in this one literary house, literature was unknown as a trade. And, above all, the questions that were discussed were never, at least, in Mallarmé's treatment, in his guidance of them, other than essential questions, considerations of art in the abstract, of literature before it coagulates into

a book, of life as its amusing and various web spins the stuff of art. When, indeed, the conversation, by some untimely hazard, drifted too near to one, became for a moment, perhaps, inconveniently practical, it was Mallarmé's solicitous politeness to wait, a little constrained, almost uneasy, rolling his cigarette in silence, until the disturbing moment had passed.

There were other disturbing moments, sometimes. I remember one night, rather late, the sudden irruption of M. de Hérédia, coming on after a dinner-party, and seating himself, in his well-filled evening dress, precisely in Mallarmé's favorite chair. He was intensely amusing, voluble, floridly vehement; Mallarmé, I am sure, was delighted to see him; but the loud voice was a little trying to his nerves, and then he did not know what to do without his chair. He was like a cat that has been turned out of its favorite corner, as he roamed uneasily about the room, resting an unaccustomed elbow on the sideboard, visibly at a disadvantage.

For the attitude of those young men, some of them no longer exactly young, who frequented the Tuesdays, was certainly the attitude of the disciple. Mallarmé never exacted it, he seemed never to notice it; yet it meant to him, all the same, a good deal; as it meant, and in the best sense, a good deal to them. He loved art with a supreme disinterestedness, and it was for the sake of art that he wished to be really a master. For he knew that he had something to teach, that he had found out some secrets worth knowing, that he had discovered a point of view which he could to some degree perpetuate in those young men who listened to him. And to them this free kind of apprenticeship was, beyond all that it gave in direct counsels, in the pattern of work, a noble influence. Mallarmé's quiet, laborious life was for some of

them the only counterpoise to the Bohemian example of the d'Harcourt or the Taverne, where art is loved, but with something of haste, in a very changing devotion. It was impossible to come away from Mallarmé's without some tranquillizing influence from that quiet place, some impersonal ambition towards excellence, the resolve, at least, to write a sonnet, a page of prose, that should be in its own way as perfect as one could make it, worthy of Mallarmé.

II.

"Poetry," said Mallarmé, "is the language of a state of crisis;" and all his poems are the evocation of a passing ecstasy, arrested in mid-flight. This ecstasy is never the mere instinctive cry of the heart, the simple human joy or sorrow, which, like the Parnassians, but for not quite the same reason, he did not admit in poetry. It is a mental transposition of emotion or sensation, veiled with atmosphere, and becoming, as it becomes a poem, pure beauty. Here, for instance, in a poem which I have translated line for line, and almost word for word, a delicate emotion, a figure vaguely divined, a landscape magically evoked, blend in a single effect.

SIGH.

My soul, calm sister, towards thy
brow whereon scarce grieves
An autumn strewn already with its
russet leaves,
And towards the wandering sky of
thine angelic eyes,
Mounts, as in melancholy gardens
may arise
Some faithful fountain sighing whitely
towards the blue!
—Towards the blue pale and pure that
sad October knew,
When, in those depths, it mirrored lan-
guors infinite,
And agonizing leaves upon the waters
white,

Windily drifting, traced a furrow cold
and dun,
Where, in one long last ray, lingered
the yellow sun.

Another poem comes a little closer to
nature, but with what exquisite pre-
cautions, and with what surprising
novelty in its unhesitating touch on
actual things!

SEA-WIND.

The flesh is sad, alas! and all the
books are read.
Flight, only flight! I feel that birds
are wild to tread
The floor of unknown foam, and to at-
tain the skies!
Nought, neither ancient gardens mir-
rored in the eyes,
Shall hold this heart that bathes in
waters its delight,
O nights! nor yet my waking lamp,
whose lonely light
Shadows the vacant paper, whiteness
profits best,
Nor the young wife who rocks her
baby at her breast.
I will depart. O steamer, swaying
rope and spar,
Lift anchor for exotic lands that lie
afar!
A weariness, outworn by cruel hopes,
still clings
To the last farewell handkerchief's
last beckonings!
And are not these, the masts inviting
storms, not these
That an awakening wind bends over
wrecking seas,
Lost, not a sail, a sail, a flowering isle,
ere long?
But, O my heart, hear thou, hear thou
the sailors' song!

These (need I say?) belong to the
earlier period, in which Mallarmé had
not yet withdrawn his light into the
cloud; and to the same period belong
the prose-poems, one of which, perhaps
the most exquisite, I will translate
here.

AUTUMN LAMENT.

Ever since Maria left me for
another star—which? Orion, Altair,
or thou, green Venus?—I have always

cherished solitude. How many long
days I have passed, alone with my cat!
By *alone*, I mean without a material
being, and my cat is a mystical com-
panion, a spirit. I may say, then, that
I have passed long days alone with
my cat, and alone, with one of the
last writers of the Roman decadence;
for since the white creature is no
more, strangely and singularly, I have
loved all that may be summed up in
the word: fall. Thus, in the year, my
favorite season is during those last lan-
guid summer days which come just
before the autumn; and, in the day,
the hour when I take my walk is the
hour when the sun lingers before fad-
ing, with rays of copper-yellow on the
gray walls, and of copper-red on the
window-panes. And just so the litera-
ture from which my soul demands de-
light must be the poetry dying out of
the last moments of Rome, provided,
nevertheless, that it breathes nothing
of the rejuvenating approach of the
Barbarians, and does not stammer
the infantile Latin of the first Chris-
tian prose.

I read, then, one of those beloved
poems (whose streaks of rouge have
more charm for me than the fresh
cheek of youth), and buried my hand
in the fur of the pure animal, when a
barrel-organ began to sing, languish-
ingly and melancholy, under my win-
dow. It played in the long alley of
poplars, whose leaves seem mournful
to me even in spring, since Maria
passed that way with the tapers, for
the last time. Yes, sad people's in-
strument, truly: the piano glitters,
the violin brings one's torn fibers to
the light, but the barrel-organ, in the
twilight of memory, has set me de-
spairingly dreaming. While it mur-
mured a gaily vulgar air, such as puts
mirth into the heart of the suburbs, an
old-fashioned, an empty air, how came
it that its refrain went to my very
soul, and made me weep like a roman-
tic ballad? I drank it in, and I did
not throw a penny out of the window
for fear of disturbing my own impres-
sion, and of perceiving that the instru-
ment was not singing by itself.

Between these characteristic, clear,
and beautiful poems, in verse and in
prose, and the opaque darkness of the
later writings, come one or two poems,

perhaps the finest of all, in which already clearness is "a secondary grace," but in which a subtle rapture finds incomparable expression. "*L'Après-midi d'un Faune*" and "*Hérodiade*" have already been introduced, in different ways, to English readers; the former by Mr. Gosse, in a detailed analysis; the second I have translated in the last number of the *Savoy*. In these two poems I find Mallarmé at the moment when his own desire achieves itself; every word is a jewel, scattering and recapturing sudden fire, every image is a symbol, and the whole poem is visible music. After this point began that fatal "last period" which comes to most artists who have thought too curiously, or dreamed too remote dreams, or followed a too wandering beauty. Mallarmé had long been only too conscious that all publication is "almost a speculation, on one's modesty, for one's silence;" that "to unclench the fists, breaking one's sedentary dream, for a ruffling face to face with the idea," was after all unnecessary to his own conception of himself, a mere way of convincing the public that one exists; and having achieved, as he thought, "the right to abstain from doing anything exceptional," he devoted himself, doubly, to silence. Seldom condescending to write, he wrote now only for himself, and in a manner which certainly saved him from intrusion. Some of Mr. Meredith's poems, and occasional passages of his prose, can alone give in English some faint idea of the later prose and verse of Mallarmé. The verse could not, I think, be translated; of the prose, in which an extreme lucidity of thought comes to us but glimmeringly through the entanglements of a construction, part Latin, part English, I shall endeavor to translate some fragments, in speaking of the theoretic writings, contained in the two volumes of "*Vers et Prose*" and "*Divagations*."

III.

It is the distinction of Mallarmé to have aspired after an impossible liberation of the soul of literature from what is fretting and constraining in "the body of that death," which is the mere literature of words. Words, he has realized, are of value only as notation of the free breath of the spirit; words, therefore, must be employed with an extreme care, in their choice and adjustment, in setting them to reflect and chime upon one another, yet least of all for their own sake, for what they can never, except by suggestion, express. "Every soul is a melody," he has said, "which needs to be readjusted; and for that are the flute or viol of each." The word, treated indeed with a kind of "adoration," as he says, is so regarded in a magnificent sense, in which it is apprehended as a living thing, itself the vision rather than the reality; at least the philtre of the evocation. The word, chosen as he chooses it, is for him a liberating principle, by which the spirit is extracted from matter; takes form, perhaps assumes immortality. Thus an artificiality, even, in the use of words, that seeming artificiality which comes from using words as if they had never been used before, that chimerical search after the virginity of language, is but the paradoxical outward sign of an extreme discontent, with even the best of their service. Writers who use words fluently, seeming to disregard their importance, do so from an unconscious confidence in their expressiveness, which the scrupulous thinker, the precise dreamer, can never place in the most carefully chosen among them. To evoke, by some elaborate, instantaneous magic of language, without the formality of an after all impossible description; to be, rather than to express; that is what Mallarmé has consistently, and

from the first, sought in verse and prose. And he has sought this wandering, illusive beckoning butterfly, the soul of dreams, over more and more entangled ground; and it has led him into the depths of many forests, far from the sunlight. To say that he has found what he sought is impossible; but (is it possible to avoid saying?) how heroic a search, and what marvelous discoveries by the way!

I think I understand, though I cannot claim his own authority for my supposition, the way in which Mallarmé wrote verse, and the reason why it became more and more abstruse, more and more unintelligible. Remember his principle; that to name is to destroy, to suggest is to create. Note, further, that he condemns the inclusion in verse of anything but "for example, the horror of the forest, or the silent thunder afloat in the leaves; not the intrinsic, dense wood of the trees." He has received, then, a mental sensation; let it be the horror of the forest. This sensation begins to form in his brain, at first probably no more than a rhythm, absolutely without words. Gradually thought begins to concentrate itself (but with an extreme care, lest it should break the tension on which all depends) upon the sensation, already struggling to find its own consciousness. Delicately, stealthily, with infinitely timid precaution, words present themselves, at first in silence. Every word seems like a desecration, seems, the clearer it is, to throw back the original sensation farther and farther into the darkness. But, guided always by the rhythm, which is the executive soul (as, in Aristotle's definition, the soul is the form of the body), words come slowly, one by one, shaping the message. Imagine the poem already written down, at least composed. In its very imperfection, it is clear, it shows the links by which it has been riveted together; the whole process of

its construction can be studied. Now most writers would be content; but with Mallarmé the work has only begun. In the final result there must be no sign of the making, there must be only the thing made. He works over it, word by word, changing a word here, for its color, which is not precisely the color required, a word there, for the break it makes in the music. A new image occurs to him, rarer, subtler, than the one he has used; the image is transferred. By the time the poem has reached, as it seems to him, a flawless unity, the steps of the progress have been only too effectually effaced; and while the poet, who has seen the thing from the beginning, still sees the relation of point to point, the reader, who comes to it only in its final stage, finds himself in a not unnatural bewilderment. Pursue this manner of writing to its ultimate development; start with an enigma, and then withdraw the key of the enigma; and you arrive, easily, at the frozen impenetrability of those latest sonnets, in which the absence of all punctuation is scarcely a recognizable hindrance.

That, I fancy to myself, was his actual way of writing; here, in what I prefer to give as a corollary, is the theory. "Symbolist, Decadent, or Mystic, the schools thus called by themselves, or thus hastily labelled by our information-press, adopt, for meeting-place, the point of an Idealism which (similarly as in fugues, in sonatas) rejects the 'natural' materials, and, as brutal, a direct thought ordering them, to retain no more than suggestion. To be instituted, a relation between images, exact; and that therefrom should detach itself a third aspect fusible and clear, offered to the divination. Abolished, the pretension, aesthetically an error, despite its dominion over almost all the masterpieces, to enclose within the subtle pa-

per other than, for example, the horror of the forest, or the silent thunder afloat in the leaves; not the intrinsic, dense wood of the trees. Some few bursts of personal pride, veridically trumpeted, awaken the architecture of the palace, alone habitable; not of stone, on which the pages would close but ill." For example (it is his own): "I say: a flower! and out of the oblivion to which my voice consigns every contour, so far as anything save the known calyx, musically arises idea, and exquisite, the one flower absent from all bouquets." "The pure work," then, "implies the elocutionary disappearance of the poet, who yields place to the words, immobilized by the shock of their inequality; they take light from mutual reflection, like an actual trail of fire over precious stones, replacing the old lyric afflatus or the enthusiastic personal direction of the phrase." "The verse which out of many vocables remakes an entire word, new, unknown to the language, and as if magical, attains this isolation of speech." Whence, it being "music which rejoins verse, to form, since Wagner, Poetry," the final conclusion: "That we are now precisely at the moment of seeking, before that breaking up of the large rhythms of literature, and their scattering in articulate, almost instrumental, nervous waves, an art which shall complete the transposition, into the Book, of the symphony, or simply recapture our own; for, it is not in elementary sonorities of brain, strings, wood, unquestionably, but in the intellectual word at its utmost, that, fully and evidently, we should find, drawing to itself all the correspondences of the universe, the supreme Music."

Here, literally translated, in exactly the arrangement of the original, are some passages out of the theoretic writings, which I have brought together, to indicate what seem to me

the main lines of Mallarmé's doctrine. It is the doctrine which, as I have already pointed out in these pages (*Fortnightly Review*, January, 1898,) had been divined by Gérard de Nerval; but what, in Gérard, was pure vision, becomes in Mallarmé a logical sequence of meditation. Mallarmé was not a mystic, to whom anything came unconsciously; he was a thinker, in whom an extraordinary subtlety of mind was exercised on always explicit, though by no means the common, problems. "A seeker after something in the world, that is there in no satisfying measure, or not at all," he pursued his search with unwearied persistence, with a sharp mental division of dream and idea, certainly very lucid to himself, however he may have failed to render his expression clear to others. And I, for one, cannot doubt that he was, for the most part, entirely right in his statement and analysis of the new conditions under which we are now privileged or condemned to write. His obscurity was partly his failure to carry out the spirit of his own directions; but, apart from obscurity, which we may all be fortunate enough to escape, is it possible for a writer, at the present day, to be quite simple, with the old, objective simplicity, in either thought or expression? To be naïf, to be archaic, is not to be either natural or simple; I affirm that it is not natural to be what is called "natural" any longer. We have no longer the mental attitude of those to whom a story was but a story, and all stories good; we have realized, since it was proved to us by Poe, not merely that the age of epics is past, but that no long poem was ever written; the finest long poem in the world being but a series of short poems linked together by prose. And, naturally, we can no longer write what we can no longer accept. Symbolism, implicit in all literature from the beginning, as it is implicit in the

The Joinville Tunnel.

very words we use, comes to us now, at last, quite conscious of itself, offering us the only escape from our many imprisonments. We find a new, an older, sense in the so wornout forms of things; the world, which we can no longer believe in as the satisfying material object it was to our grand-parents, becomes transfigured with a new light; words, which long usage had darkened almost out of recognition,

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take fresh lustre. And it is on the lines of that spiritualizing of the word, that perfecting of form in its capacity for allusion and suggestion, that confidence in the eternal correspondences between the visible and the invisible universe, which Mallarmé taught, and too intermittently practised, that literature must now move, if it is in any sense to move forward.

Arthur Symonds.

THE JOINVILLE TUNNEL.

CHAPTER I.

The sergeant was obdurate. He had his orders, which were as Holy Writ in his eyes. They were cold gray eyes in a face hammered hard on the anvil of officialism. There were more important things than Red Cross stores.

"Your stores cannot proceed by this train, Major," said the Bavarian.

The whole of the cases consigned to Versailles lay piled up on one another on the narrow platform of St. Quentin station. It was all the more annoying because the horses and wagons had been sent on by Eustace to a point some thirty miles further along the line to Paris, and he had been promised a fair conveyance to Joinville by the general commanding the Prussian forces in the district.

But General Deganfeld was not available at present. It was many miles over the frozen country to his base. A strong French force under General de la Jonge had pushed forward from Arras, and their advent was keeping Deganfeld's hands full. There were rumors that a smaller force of Frenchmen had forced the lines behind Joinville, and had thus obtained command

of the railway line beyond the famous tunnel.

But of this the Bavarian sergeant professed to know nothing. A train-load of provisions strongly guarded had left for Joinville two hours ago. The sergeant was inclined to flout the idea that this same had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Another train would pass through shortly. This Eustace and Huddleston had hoped to make use of. They could only sit on their cases now and bemoan their ill fortune. Scattered over the goods-sheds beyond the station, a company of Bavarian infantry held the line. If there were officers, they did not show themselves.

"Nothing of the Chesterfield about these fellows," Huddleston grumbled. "What on earth shall we do now?"

Eustace was at a loss for a reply. Sad as it may seem, the Red Cross carried suspicion in its train. Doubtless the sacred cause had been abused by spies and others; indeed, the history of the war testifies to the fact. There was the ghost of a grin on the sergeant's face as he clanked away. Eustace looked along the blackness of the Orloy woods rising to the crest of

the hill under which the great tunnel of Joinville bored its way.

"Hang me if I know," he said. "We must leave the stores here, and get them to pass us on to Joinville. Then we can send the wagons back—"

Something came like the hum of a home-flying bee between the two men, and thudded into a wooden sentry box behind them. Along the dark belt of the bending woods a score of smoke jets puffed. Crack, crack, came the bullets.

Then a bugle rang out, and from the goods-sheds the Bavarians poured forth like angry gray wasps. Hardly had they formed into line before a cloud of *Franks-tireurs* broke from under cover and dashed down upon the station. They were as two to one to the Germans.

A raking volley barely served to check their headlong progress. They shot through the thin Bavarian line as if it had been so much brown paper. Then, as the *Franks-tireurs* came hurling down on the left flank of the doomed Bavarians, Eustace saw the big sergeant borne down and his skull shattered by the sweeping glance of a sword. Then the Bavarians broke like sheep, and ran for the upper spur of the woods, pursued by the victorious horsemen.

It was a mere affair of minutes. The affray was barely over before a heavy train came puffing into the station. In less time than it takes to tell, every German aboard, to the number of two score, were prisoners.

"That was well done," said a gay voice as the French cavalry officer in command strode up. "Deganfeld has had the feather drawn over his eye this time. What have we here?"

The speaker saluted Eustace and his comrade politely. Huddleston explained.

"Surely you are Captain Armand?"

he concluded. "I recollect meeting you after the fall of Metz."

"Ah, yes. Pardon that I did not recognize Captain Huddleston. I owe you one good turn, which fortune has enabled me to return. Your stores shall go on to Joinville, and I will accompany them. Indeed, I have strong reasons for getting to Joinville myself. I may say that we only hold the line on sufferance. Deganfeld is closer up than those Bavarians imagine. There are four trains at Martay yonder bringing up supports for the German force beyond Joinville, and the first of these trains may follow on at any moment. So you see I am really between the devil and the deep sea. Still, if I can only get to Joinville——"

"Would it not be better to lose no further time?" Eustace suggested. "We have the train here all ready to proceed. With the assistance of your men, we could get our stores aboard in a few minutes."

Armand agreed. Anxious and worried as he was, nothing appeared to deprive him of his gay manner. It was more than possible that on emerging from the far side of Joinville tunnel he would find himself and his company of infantry prisoners. What had happened beyond the hills nobody knew. And Armand had his own urgent reasons for a flying visit there.

Acting under the instructions of their captain, the troop of cavalry deployed again under the cover of the wood. By this time the stores were aboard the train, together with the handful of infantry that Armand had at his command. Eustace felt his spirits rising.

"What a slice of luck for us," he said, gleefully. "Personally, it doesn't matter a scrap to us what happens when we are on the other side of the tunnel. Once there, it is no far cry to our wagons."

"Wish we were well out of it, all the

same," Huddleston muttered. "Tunnels in war time are best avoided. And there are four miles of this one."

Armand swaggered up gaily. The adventure had found him in spirits. "May I ask what your object is?" said Eustace.

"Who knows?" responded the volatile captain. "Joinville is my destination. Mayhap we shall steam into the hands of the Germans. If you had been waiting, waiting as I have been—driven from pillar to post—you would understand my thirst for action."

"Meanwhile a train-load of German troops may be up to us at any moment," said Huddleston. "This is a mere *coup de main* of yours."

Armand responded serenely that such was the fact. Even as he spoke the shrill note of a distant whistle cleft the frosty air. The railway was a winding one, and as the crow flies, the approaching train was not distant more than a mile,—twice that distance as the track went. A thin jet of steam trailed along the valley.

"We must get on," Armand cried. "There are troops coming I hear. All aboard there. We shall have a race for it yet. Laden down as we are, the other train will have the pull of us."

A moment later, and the engine was jolting forward. Armand had spoken truly. His little strategy could not remain successful for long, added to which his knowledge told him that the approaching train was laden with German troops. But it was a race between a passenger and a goods train. Doubtless by this time one of the Bavarian fugitives had explained matters.

Full speed ahead was the order of the day. Despite his gay air and careless smile, Armand gazed from time to time behind him. There were the most urgent reasons why he should reach Joinville without delay.

"They are gaining on us," he cried.

The Englishmen responded nothing.

The truth was painfully apparent. And the jolt and rattle of the heavy goods trucks rendered conversation a difficulty. So far as Eustace and his colleague were concerned, the ultimate issue mattered little, as long as they eventually cleared the tunnel.

But this was anything but a certainty. A mile or more of line level as a billiard table and straight as a gun-barrel lay before them, ending in the small circular bore that meant the entrance to the tunnel. And by the time Armand and his party were half way to this, he could see behind them the buffers of the approaching engine.

"A stern chase is a long chase," said Eustace.

Armand smiled grimly. Gone was his butterfly manner; no longer did he cherish his moustache. There were enough soldiers on the approaching train to cut his little force to pieces ten times over.

"They will be up to us before we are through," said Huddleston.

"You are fond of sport," Armand cut in swiftly. "You bet a little, of course,—all Englishmen do. Then I will bet you what you call six to four that yonder engine never catches us at all."

"You can't prevent it," said Eustace.

By way of reply Armand scrambled to the front of the truck where the three were standing. He gave a quick, crisp command to the engine driver, and the train immediately commenced to slacken speed. When finally it came to a standstill, its whole length was secreted in the blackness of the tunnel, like a worm underground.

"Are you mad?" Eustace cried. "Man alive, in three minutes that other train will be on to us. To destroy them is very well, but why allow us to perish?"

"Enough," Armand responded curtly. "I know my business. You will see what you shall see. Uncouple the last three trucks there."

The situation looked desperate

enough for anything. There was any odds on a fight between the two trains, with the balance faintly in favor of the Germans. To bring this matter to an issue in the black suffocation of a tunnel was horrible.

The train stood fast inside the grim, smoky tunnel. Already, some eight hundred yards away, the pursuing engine forged steadily onward. Eustace would have interfered had he dared. In a wondering sort of way, he watched a handful of sappers uncoupling the last three trucks, he felt the jolt and jerk as the locomotive slowly moved on, and then he saw a pair of rails with their sleepers wrenched away, leaving an ugly hole in the track.

"Now do you understand?" Armand whispered, fiercely.

Eustace held his breath in the excitement of the moment. He could distinctly hear the thud, thud of the coming train. Then its whistle shrieked hideously, there was a resounding crash as the two solid masses met, and in less time than it takes to tell, the mouth of the tunnel was packed, jammed with hundreds of tons of wood and steel. There was a scream of escaping steam, the thud of an explosion, a few yells and groans, and all was still. Armand had left behind him a rampart welded into a solid mass as liquid iron is forged under a hammer. Many an hour would necessarily elapse before the way could be cleared again.

"This is horrible," Huddlestone cried.

"It may not be war, perhaps," Armand said coolly; "but you will admit this is no time for the exchange of social amenities. But for my little stratagem you would have been a long time getting your stores to Joinville."

The train was jolting and pounding forward again. For some minutes nobody spoke. The Englishmen were peering somewhat anxiously ahead.

Away down the line Eustace could see two lights travelling.

"Surely there is something on the track," he cried. "The driver ——" But the driver was already aware of the fact. Armand shortly demanded of him what was wrong.

"A train backing along the tunnel," came the startling reply, "and on the same line of rails as ourselves. *Mon Dieu*, it ——"

The rest of the speech was drowned in the shrill whistle of the engine.

CHAPTER II.

For a brief space something like consternation reigned supreme. The peculiar horror of the situation struck home with full force. Armand had been hoist with his own petard; he had fallen headlong into the trap he had laid for another.

"I don't understand it at all," he muttered.

"I do," said Huddlestone grimly. "Less than an hour before you made your successful raid just now, a German train passed through. Without doubt she has been headed off by a force of your men, and has risked everything, to the extent of running back on her tracks, for assistance."

Armand nodded moodily. The explanation seemed reasonable; indeed, it was the only one possible under the circumstances.

"We shall have to fight her," said the Frenchman, "since retreat is out of the question. There are troops aboard, of course?"

"Not more than a score," Huddlestone replied. "Their goods are mainly camp stores for the garrison occupying Fort Bazan."

"Ah! Then our task is lighter than I anticipated," said Armand.

All this was a mere matter of moments. Already the lights on the approaching engine were growing more

steady, plain proof of the fact that the other train was coming to a standstill. When, finally, the two trains pulled up, not more than five yards separated them.

"Back there," a guttural German voice smote out into the smoky darkness. "You cannot get through. A force of French infantry with two guns holds the valley below Joinville."

"That is good hearing, indeed," Armand cried in the same language. "Learn that we too are French, and that we have not the same objection to proceeding. You will oblige us by showing the way."

The German officer in charge of the other train wasted no time in idle questions. He knew enough of the game of war to be surprised at nothing. A response came in the shape of a score of bullets fired haphazard into the thick darkness. Nothing loth, the French replied. For some minutes the desultory and useless war of small arms continued. Ever and anon a bullet would thud into a case or the side of a truck, it would tinkle against the masonry of the tunnel. But, on the whole, the fusillade was absolutely futile.

Still, the situation was thrilling enough in all conscience. To retreat was out of the question; to proceed, for the present at any rate, was equally impossible. Add to this the inky darkness of the tunnel, its horror solely illuminated by the sullen flash of the rifles, and an atmosphere of burnt paper and smoke that tasted acrid on the tongue, and stung the eyes and nose like needles.

Standing behind the shelter of a big packing case, Eustace and Huddleston took no part in the affray. What the end of this alarming adventure would be it was impossible to say. And as the moments passed, the atmosphere grew thick and oppressive. Eus-

tace was conscious of an unusual moisture on his forehead.

"This is stifling," he said. "I can hardly breathe."

"Same here," gasped Huddleston. "My nose is dripping with blood."

Gradually the firing slackened and died sullenly away. Perhaps the utter uselessness of it appealed to both sets of combatants simultaneously. Doubtless they, too, were fearsome of the deadly poisonous atmosphere. More or less, the meaning of this was a mystery. The tunnel contained two lines of rails, the roof was fairly high, and generally a strong current of air passed through.

But not now. The seal of wood and iron brought about by Armand's ingenuity at the far end of the tunnel had prevented the free ingress of pure air, and the dense volumes of acrid smoke had done the rest.

Armand fairly sobbed and struggled for his breath. He fought his way over to the cab of the engine, and in a hoarse whisper asked for a piece of cotton waste. This he proceeded to soak in the oil from the stoker's can. Then he placed the mass upon the boiler and applied a light.

A flaring yellow flame flashed out. Within its ring of radiance could be seen the engines and leading trucks of both trains. On the fore part of either the troops had gathered. Numerically, the proportion was greatly on the side of the French.

"Rush them," Armand cried, "rush them whilst the flare lasts." Like rats, the nimble little Gauls leapt on to the metals. A few shots at short range were exchanged, in the midst of which the yellow light suddenly died away. By the time Armand had replenished it, his men were cheering hoarsely in possession of the German train. A dead body or two lay on the track; from a truck here and there came the gurgle and groan of the wounded.

"This is worse than murder," said the stripling officer in charge of the German train. "There is reason in all things, Captain. Pray command me. Circumstances place me entirely at your service."

"You will recollect that you brought this entirely upon yourself," Armand replied dryly. "Meanwhile, we may pay too highly for the time wasted in the interchange of politeness. We shall be asphyxiated. Pray precede us, so that we may get out of this without delay."

No time was lost in getting under way again. The mere motions of the trains fanned up a slight breeze, which, languid as it was, came sweetly and soothingly to breasts literally bursting for the want of it. Armand's spirits rose, a soft whistle escaped his lips.

"*Eh, bien,*" he said, "but this is something to remember, something to tell one's friends in after life and——"

"Be received with polite incredulity," said Huddlestope. "This is literally the hottest place I have ever been in. The air is better, but not much less stifling than it was before. Captain, I trust your friends have not been trying on a little amateur sapping of their own at the other end of this confounded tunnel."

The melodious lilt faded suddenly from Armand's lips. "I don't quite understand you," he said.

"Don't you?" said Huddlestope. "Supposing your friends towards Joinville are not particularly strong in numbers. They appear to be masters of the situation for the time being, but their position would be immensely strengthened by possession of the railway. And how would they proceed to make sure of the railway? Why, by blowing up the mouth of the tunnel directly they had driven back that train."

"Then you mean to suggest ——?"

"That the thing is *un fait accompli*. I feel certain that what I say is correct,

and that we are literally sealed up here like sardines in a tin. Otherwise, the atmosphere would not be so insufferably close. You see the gravity of the situation?"

Armand shrugged his shoulders.

"It is not lost upon me," he said. "Fortunately, the suspense will not be unduly prolonged. We shall soon know."

Both trains were moving slowly on. Calculating by moments, the cars should not have been remote from the exit over against Joinville. And yet, hanging anxiously over the side, the two Englishmen could discern nothing beyond the purple-shot darkness.

There was no circular focus of light, no welcome ray penetrating the exit from the tunnel. Either some calamity had happened, or they were the victims of a cruel misfortune.

"The exit is assuredly blocked up," Eustace muttered.

Armand's reply was unheard. The pilot train, forging slowly ahead, bumped and clattered, the trucks came thudding together along its entire length, and then finally came to a standstill.

"For heaven's sake shut off steam there, or you will be into us," came a harsh voice from the pioneers. "There is something on the line."

The second train also came to its brakes. Armand hastened to the scene of the trouble. The young German in charge of the other transport was already examining his surroundings with the aid of a lantern.

"What has happened?" Armand asked, anxiously.

"The whole line is strewn with masonry," was the reply. "Look for yourself, and see if it is not so, *Monsieur le Capitaine.*"

Armand took the lantern which the other proffered, and flashed its sickly yellow rays upwards. Not only was the line strewn with masses of rock

and earth and twisted brickwork, but the serried mass rose upwards till roof and floor came together. Huddleston had guessed it. Both exits from the tunnel had been destroyed.

"A most amazing thing," Armand cried. "A marvellous coincidence." The young German smiled somewhat grimly.

"I guessed this," he said, "though I had no need to tell you. It becomes necessary to go back in the direction of Orloy."

"Into the hands of your countrymen, who have doubtless regained the lost ground there," Armand said, dryly. "My friend, to prevent accidents I contrived to seal up the entrance of the tunnel after my train entered."

"Then we are caught like rats in a pipe."

"So it seems. But can you inform me how my brilliant scheme came to be so speedily pilrated as this?"

"That is merely conjecture," the youthful German replied. "I only know that my train was headed back by troops two miles this side of Joinville. They were in force, and I feared derailment. For the time, at any rate, the valley seems to have fallen into your hands. The enemy bore me back into the tunnel, and that is all I know. The position is anything but a pleasing one."

Armand agreed sullenly. He understood perfectly what had happened. A body of troops had made a dash for Joinville, and they had destroyed a portion of the tunnel, with a view to checking any advance on the part of General Deganfeld. By an amazing chance, both exits had gone simultaneously.

Apparently there was nothing to be done but sit down and endure it. Sooner or later the Bavarian advance from Marlay must result in communications being opened up again. But Deganfeld was by no means over

strong, and a large French force—the force Armand was so anxious to touch—hovered menacingly in the country about Joinville.

Under these circumstances, many days might elapse before the tunnel was cleared. That Deganfeld would make desperate efforts to do so was certain. That the French would do their best to prevent him was inevitable. To force the obstacle from within, aided by a mere handful of men without tools, was practically impossible.

"And we are without stores," said Armand. "We might hold out for a couple of days. Major, your cases are ——"

"Not mine," Eustace said, hurriedly. "Besides, we cannot get much nourishment out of surgical appliances. In any case, we shall perish miserably ere long, for want of air. The atmosphere is insufferable."

Eustace spoke truly. The air was hot and heavy, a sense of languor and fatigue lay upon every man there. As yet, they hardly realized the full extent of the danger. Unless relief came speedily, a horrible death lay before them. The black darkness was in itself a terror.

"Something must be done," Armand said, hoarsely. "Come, is there not one of you who can suggest anything?"

The young German officer touched Armand's elbow.

"There is one desperate chance," he said. "If you follow me, I will show you the way."

"Lead on," said Armand. "Nothing can be more desperate than this."

CHAPTER III.

Lantern in hand, the German plunged forward. He was followed by Armand, together with the Englishmen. No word was spoken on either side, the journey being undertaken in

grim silence. At some distance from the trains and the troops the air was a little less vitiated, and oppressed lungs drew breath more freely. At the end of a mile the guide paused.

"Do you notice anything?" he asked.

They all had, almost at the same moment. They noticed a purer, cooler air, like champagne to their jaded senses.

"And there seems to be an absolute draught," said Huddleston.

"Hardly that," said the German. "It has gone again. Half a dozen men might manage to exist here for a time, but no more."

"I can't understand whence comes the air," said Armand.

"It seems to me that we Germans know your country better than you know it yourselves," said the other, with a dryness that brought the blood to Armand's cheek. "But that is by the way. As a matter of fact, we are exactly under the ventilating shaft of the tunnel. It passes through the hill, rising to a round tower of stone beyond,—a capital landmark."

"You are right," Armand cried, eagerly. "I remember now."

"Very good, Captain. I saw that we had one desperate chance, and that is a fact. It may be just possible for us to climb up the shaft and seek assistance. There is no other way."

Armand was eager for the attempt, and the Englishmen were nothing loth to follow. The German proceeded, lantern in hand.

"How did you learn this?" Armand asked.

"We left nothing to chance," was the reply. "Do you suppose an important detail like this would be overlooked?"

"Never mind that," Armand growled. "How do you propose to ascend?"

By way of reply the German flashed his lantern along the slimy walls of the tunnel. Presently he found what he wanted,—a square wooden trap, which

he proceeded to pull away from the wall. This done, a hole barely large enough for a man to squeeze into was disclosed.

"More charming than it seems," the German explained. "The semi-circular pipe leads on to the roof of the tunnel. There is an iron grating above us, if you will take the trouble to look."

Sure enough, as the lantern's rays flashed on the roof, a rusty, sooty grating came in the line of light. Like a cat, the German wriggled himself into the hole, pushing his lantern before him, the others following.

It was a dusty, dingy, horrible, choky business, resulting in hands and faces being smothered in soot and cluders, but it was accomplished at last. When, finally, the four adventurers stood on the grating, they could see the brilliant shield of the blue sky far above them as a cerulean circle clear cut by the funnel, and they could breathe again.

The pure frosty air ran like quicksilver along Armand's veins. "It is good to live, after all," he cried. "Still there is much to be done. Herr Lieutenant, how do you propose to reach the summit?"

"Nothing easier," said the other. "The way is provided, sir." A flight of iron ladders led upwards. It was a long and tedious business, for the shaft was many hundred of feet through the heart of the hill, and the ladders were of iron and absolutely perpendicular.

The intense cold struck, even down there. Each of the adventurers could feel the chill grip of the metal as it struck through their gloves. As they toiled up, foot by foot, the pace gradually slackened. It was fortunate, perhaps, that darkness reigned supreme, and thus veiled the real danger of the undertaking.

"I'm glad I can't see anything," Huddleston panted. "Looking down from

a height always makes me confoundedly giddy. And we must be up ——"

"Don't think of it," Eustace replied. "I'm trying not to, and I never was in such a blue funk in all my life. Sebastopol was nothing to this."

All things come to an end, and the weary climb was over at last. When the four reached the top of the shaft a brief terror awaited them. Over the entire surface a network of iron completed the semblance of a cage.

"Good heavens!" Huddleston groaned. "Have we come all this way to be baffled like this! How maddening!"

Armand swore volubly. Then annoyance took the place of anger, as the German reached up and lifted the center of the grill. The latter seemed to know perfectly well that the grill possessed a swinging doorway.

"It is the way we have beaten you all along," he said. "We know everything, you know nothing,—except how to fight."

Armand turned away bitterly mortified. The truth stung like a whip-lash. Ere he could think of a suitable reply, the boom of a gun, followed by the quick rattle of musketry fire, smote on the ear. Evidently, sharp work was in progress down in the valley towards Joinville.

A risky jump of some fifteen feet, on to snow frozen as hard as granite, made a fitting termination to the hazardous side of the adventure. The volatile Armand burst out laughing as he surveyed his companions.

"Did one ever see four such disreputable scarecrows?" he cried. "Still, we can afford to smile at our misfortunes now. Forward, *mes amis*."

A brisk run of twenty minutes brought the quartette on the scene of action. A miniature pitched battle between a Prussian regiment, hurried up by General Deganfeld, and a cloud of *Francs-tireurs* was in full blast. Ar-

mand ran forward to an eminence, and waved aloft his handkerchief, which he had tied to his sword. The German lieutenant followed his example.

At the unexpected spectacle of a French and Prussian officer standing amicably side by side, and waving miniature flags of truce, the firing ceased. Then, by mutual consent, Armand and the German respectively returned to their own lines. A few minutes later, and a hurried conference between the leaders of both forces had taken place.

The scene which followed was not the least strange incident of that marvellous campaign. Amongst the wreckage at the mouth of the tunnel, hundreds of French and German troops worked side by side. From either set of rails their respective officers watched them in silence. Up the slopes the arms were piled.

At the end of two hours the way was practically clear. A rousing cheer went up as the last block of brickwork was rolled aside, and then there staggered from the tunnel four score of men, grim and pallid, and gasping in the pure air of the afternoon. There was nothing for it now but to bring out the trains, which was done accordingly.

"Whom do they belong to?" asked the German leader.

"The problem is not yet solved, Colonel," responded the French commander. "Let them form part of the stake we were playing for when we were so strangely interrupted two hours ago."

The German saluted grimly. He desired nothing better. Within two minutes of this polite interchange of courtesies, the roar of conflict had recommenced. From a snug vantage ground, Eustace and Huddleston watched the progress of the fray. They saw the tide of victory ebb and flow, they saw the Germans gradually

beaten back and retire sullenly to the cover of the woods. Then, a little time later, Armand came up with a gay smile upon his face.

"Ah," he cried, "we have to be grateful for small mercies in these dark days. Your sympathy was with us, I am sure."

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"You!" said Eustace. "I was thinking of my stores, you know."

"Quite so. Then you are fortunate, for these two trains are going right through to Joinville at once. We are well out of the adventure, my friends."

And Eustace heartily concurred.

Fred M. White.

THE EMPRESS-REGENT OF CHINA.

The most interesting personage in China during the past thirty years has been, and still is, without doubt, the lady whom we style Empress-dowager. She was never empress, not even as imperial consort, having been but the secondary wife of Hsien-fêng, the Emperor who fled from his capital on the approach of the Anglo-French forces in 1860. But she took the title as the mother of that ill-starred monarch's heir, in which capacity she was allowed to share with the widow proper the regency during the minority of the Emperor Tung Chih (or Chê, for there is no agreement as to the transliteration of Chinese sounds). To our notions this was a most anomalous arrangement; nothing more certain to lead to trouble could be conceived. Under such a régime, harmony in the State could not have been maintained, had the two women been angels, whereas, only one of them could by any reasonable use of language be assigned to that order of beings, and she the childless one. The female duumvirate was not what was intended,—was in fact an unforeseen result of the last will and testament of the Emperor Hsien-fêng, who died at his hunting lodge at Jêho, whither he himself had been hunted by the victorious invaders; and as the consequences have been so curious and so important, it

may be well to recall the transaction in brief and very imperfect outline.

The fundamental law of the Ta-tsing dynasty is the Salic law. No woman and no eunuch can ever reign or rule. Conforming to the laws of his house, the Emperor in his will nominated a Council of Regency during the minority of his infant son, afterwards known as the Emperor Tung-chih. The Council was composed of two imperial princes and the Minister Sun-chê. To his two wives, the true, but childless one, and the secondary one, who was mother of the Prince Imperial, he bequeathed the guardianship of the infant. The Emperor placed his real confidence in the first, the legal wife; but he was fond of the other, the mother of his heir. A serious dilemma thus confronted him, which he thought to evade by placing in the hands of the Empress a private and personal testament, giving her absolute authority over her colleague, only to be exercised, however, in certain emergencies. As a matter of fact, the power was never called into exercise.

The Empress-mother was twenty-seven years old, clever, ambitious, and apparently fearless. She saw with envy the whole power of the State passing into the hands of the Council of Regency, while the two widows were relegated to a quite subordinate place.

Brooding over this imaginary wrong, she conceived a scheme by which the position might be reversed, and confided it to her brother-in-law, Prince Kung,—the same who for so many years presided over the Tsungli-yamèn with such genial urbanity; the same who recently died and came to life again, then died for good. The ambition which the Empress-mother confided to Prince Kung was nothing less than to suppress the Council of Regency, and set up in its place the authority of the two Empresses. Inasmuch, however, as they were ignorant of affairs, and women to boot, the Prince, himself, was to be the real executive and *de facto* ruler of the empire. Prince Kung yielded to the seduction, and thus became accessory to the violation of the dynastic law,—of what other law, human or divine, it is needless to particularize. The dilatory Chinese can be prompt enough on occasion, as has recently been seen, and Prince Kung took the very first opportunity of executing the plot hatched by his sister-in-law. The Regents were returning from the obsequies of the deceased Emperor when Prince Kung launched trumped-up charges against them of neglect of certain funeral rites, had them arrested on the road, and executed. By this summary violence, the two Empresses were securely established as Regents, with Prince Kung as Chancellor of the empire.

For a few years things went smoothly. Prince Kung was ably assisted in the government by Wên-si'-ang, Hanki, and other patriotic statesmen, who seem to have left no worthy successors. The two Regents seldom met, for the palace in Peking is a town rather than a building, or rather it is a series of palaces, separated by wide areas. From the relative position of the buildings in which they had their respective apartments, the ladies were known as the Eastern and Western

Empresses, the former being the title commonly applied to the one whom we have termed the true Empress.

The Court on its return from voluntary exile was naturally on its best behavior, having to feel its way with the foreign Powers who had established their representatives in the capital. The Powers on their part were indulgent, moved thereto by the circumstances of the Court, a child on the throne under the guardianship of two widows. Moreover, a great calamity hung over the Chinese empire in the form of a devastating rebellion, which was a danger to foreign interests, only second to that to the Chinese themselves. Hence, by common consent, the Government and the Court were treated with anxious deference by the representatives of the Western nations, who could seek no audience of the infant, and, not knowing what to do about the two women, did nothing. So the Palace and the Forbidden City were kept sealed against intrusion, and the domestic drama was allowed free play within the precincts. The young Emperor was growing towards maturity, so, in an even more important sense, was his imperial mother, the rising and the ruling spirit in the whole ménage. Her consort, the "Eastern" Empress, was full of gentleness, meditation, and widowhood; in private life her example would have ensured the highest commendation, with a chance of posthumous honors. She was, therefore, unequally yoked with her sterner sister, and the pair could never have really worked together to any practical end. The eclipse of the weaker luminary was only a question of time.

What transpires in an oriental palace is filtered through such miasmatic media that every separate detail is open to something more than ordinary suspicion, and first impressions may form a distorted picture. But in the

long run, after cancelling out contradictions and threshing the residue approximations to the truth may be arrived at, more or less definite according to the force of the personalities concerned. Where the character is feeble its spectrum fails to penetrate the thick vapors that surround it, and is liable to be refracted into the semblance of something unlike itself. This was the case with Prince Ch'un, the father of the present Emperor, who so long as he remained in seclusion, was believed to be a violent reactionary, the most vehement opponent of foreigners and their ideas, head of the "war party," and so forth. But when the fall of his elder brother Kung, in 1884, necessitated the emergence of Prince Ch'un from retirement, and his assumption of important public offices, the mask was found to have covered features of the mildest type. The fire-eater roared like a sucking-dove. He was liberal and well-disposed to foreigners, demeaning himself towards them absolutely like a gentleman, and winning golden opinions wherever he appeared.

There was never such ambiguity about the Empress-regent. No veil was thick enough to hide her character. Her career has been consistent, and she remains what she has often been called, the "only man in the empire." Possessed by three passions, of which the two having pelf and power for their object have survived the more transient one, and still gather strength with advancing years, the portrait of her Majesty that is most intelligent to the European comprehension is that which represents her as a counterpart of Catherine II. What she might have been with Catherine's Christian education, and unhandcapped by enforced seclusion, it would be idle to guess. It may indeed seem strange that a woman so endowed should have been content to pass her

public life behind the screen; but there have been many masterful women before her to whom the *purda* offered but a flimsy obstacle to the exercise of their power.

Of the scandals of the Palace it would serve no useful purpose to speak in detail; while on the other hand it is impossible to ignore them altogether, since they have been a factor in Palace politics, and the source of some of the bitterest family quarrels. The eunuch, at all events, is a feature of Palace life which may be accepted as historical,—a convenient medium both for catering for his owner's whims, and for making free with his secrets, and her Majesty has been both well and ill served by those obsequious ministrants. An intense curiosity has always been one of her marked characteristics, a feeling which she has taken every means convenient to her station to gratify. There was once a story of her salad days when her practised eye fell upon a young gallant attached to one of the European legations, to whom occult intelligence was conveyed through appropriate channels. Adonis would not have been wholly averse from learning something of that mysterious interior from which diplomatists were severely excluded, but it was supposed he yielded to the advice of his comrades, who represented that getting in might be easier than getting safely out of such a *galère*.

The Empress-regent ruled China for twenty-eight years, from 1861 to 1889, a period embracing two minorities of equal duration. In comparison with the exhibition that has been made since the young Emperor assumed full power, it must be admitted that the empire was not ill governed under the regency. Absolutely without experience when she took the reins, the Empress-regent was loyally supported by Prince Kung and the wise states-

men already mentioned. Under their moderating counsels the empire was safely conducted through the Taeping rebellion, as well as a series of other insurrectionary crises which included the Mohammedan rebellion in Yunnan, and that of Yakub Beg in Kashgar, all of them real dangers to the empire. The quarrel with Japan in 1874 was also adroitly smoothed over without a rupture of relations. And if the like success did not attend the issue of the dispute with France ten years later, it may be well to remember that the wise counsellors were gone, leaving only Prince Kung, between whom and the Regent there had grown up a bitter feud, and he was dismissed from office in the middle of the crisis in 1884.

While the Regent was learning the science of governing, which she did with avidity, during the first minority her legal status as mother of the sovereign was unassailable. Through that alone was she able to hold her ground with the Eastern Empress, the politic Kung contriving all the while to play off the one Regent against the other, so keeping his balance and maintaining his grip of power. This was gall and wormwood to the Western Empress, who soon became as impatient to get rid of Prince Kung as she had been of the Council of Regency. Prudence, however, restrained her from any overt attack on him, because her public authority would come to an end on her son's reaching his majority, though, so long as he lived, nothing could divest her of her maternal prerogatives. What Prince Kung left unfilled of her cup of bitterness, was supplied by the pious Eastern Empress, whose thoughts were more congenial to the atmosphere of heaven than to the cruel world which her "Western" colleague was bustling in. A stab from such an unsuspected quarter was sharp indeed, but it fell

out in a perfectly natural though highly dramatic way.

After the assumption of power by the Emperor Tung-chih in 1873, a meeting took place between the Regents, his guardians. The senior Empress sent a message to her imperial sister proposing an official meeting in a certain pavilion in the Palace. After the ceremonial courtesies, the Eastern Empress said she had sought the interview because their common task had now been fulfilled, and it was fitting that they should lay down their office and take formal leave of each other. For her part, she added, she was well pleased to be relieved of the responsibility. She was also gratified that they two had been able to work so long in harmony for the welfare of the young Emperor and of the State. So far well, but the lady had a postscript to add, in the manner which is a stock device in plays and novels. She produced the private will of their late husband, and disclosed for the first time to her sister the powers which she had kept dormant these dozen years. "Now," she said, "there is no further use for such a document," whereupon she burned it before the eyes of the Western Empress. This dramatic scene made a terrible impression on the Empress-mother. She was not converted by it, but changed, giving way to sudden hatred of the deceased Emperor who mistrusted her, and to the woman who had been made the confidante of that distrust. How her relations to her ex-colleague in the regency, and even to her own son, were affected by this humiliating discovery can only be conjectured. What is known is that neither of them long survived the incident, and much speculation has been built on the sequence of events.

The life and death of the young Emperor Tung-chih, the son of Hsien-feng and the present Empress-reg-

nante, seems little more than an episode in the career of his imperial—and imperious—mother. He died within two years of his full accession, removed by his own mother as some would have us believe, but by quite other agencies as others no less boldly affirm. Amateur coroners without evidence may well overreach the measured steps of the authentic chronicler. That the Empress was capable of doing away with her son, or a dozen of them if they stood in her way, may be conceded,—but not without a motive. And the motive for filicide in this case has hardly been made clear enough to carry a verdict of wilful murder. In his brief career the young Emperor was the subject of much tea-house gossip in Peking. He was an original, and the son of his mother in more ways than one. He delighted in breaking bounds incognito, and in a species of revelry not conducive to good health. The common talk was that he died of one disease while being treated for another, the Court physicians not daring to give a true diagnosis. But any Chinese sick-room, more particularly a high and mighty one, is a dark corner where things are seldom what they seem.

With the disappearance of her son, the last plank in the legal platform of the Empress-mother disappeared. But her appetite had grown by what it fed upon. She had now had fourteen years' schooling in statecraft, and she resolved that, *per fas et nefas*, reign who might, she would govern. It is not necessary to credit her with very lofty patriotic sentiments, though the friends of China were satisfied throughout her reign that the Empress was "the right man in the right place," there being in fact no other competent ruler, either within the Imperial circle or outside of it, so far as was then known, or has as yet appeared. Of

this no better proof could be adduced than the mere fact that this audacious woman, with no *locus standi*, should have planned and executed the *coup d'état* whereby the natural heir was passed over, and she was permitted to exercise the last prerogative of an emperor in nominating his successor,—nay, more, of achieving the seeming impossibility of the posthumous adoption of a second son by the Emperor Hsien-fêng, who had been dead fourteen years. She stood on no ceremony, and waited neither for precedents nor soothsayers.

The story of her second *coup d'état* of January 1875 has been often related,—how the Empress, so-called, caused her own sister's child to be snatched out of its warm bed on a bitter night, and conveyed into the Palace, whence he was proclaimed Emperor at daybreak. By this stroke the Regent at once aggrandized her own family, made a friend of a younger brother-in-law, the father of the child, to replace the elder who had become an enemy, and to sum up all, secured for herself a new lease of power. For she who could thus make an emperor could also make a regent. The infant who had greatness in this way thrust upon him is the Emperor who has reigned twenty-three years under the style of Kwang Su,—for it is well to remember that these terms are not proper names,—and many a time, no doubt, has that soft young man lamented the fate that dragged him from his peaceful cot to a bed that has decidedly not been for him one of roses.

The new succession necessitated a rearrangement of family influence, for many changes had taken place. In the early portion of her legitimate rule, as we have seen, the Regent leaned upon Prince Kung, the Grand Secretary Wên-si'ang, and others, while the Eastern Empress was a

strong moral support to her. The last named statesman died in 1875, as did also the Eastern Empress. It is easy, of course, to suggest foul play in her case also; but men have died, and women too, from time to time, and not by poison. The more charitable theory among the Chinese admirers of the deceased lady was that she had made a virtuous suicide as a protest against the scandals of the Palace, which she could neither control nor endure. Which also may be an amiable fiction.

But it was the relations between Prince Kung and the perpetual Regent that now became the most interesting feature. Their intercourse had been strained from the outset. Their alliance was not a holy one, and there is no more treacherous bond of union than participation in a common crime. As in the case of more commonplace conspirators, they quarrelled over the spoil, each tried to overreach the other and to grasp the whole power, for power means patronage, and in China patronage means great worldly prosperity to the patron. We hear from time to time of the vast wealth of the Li family,—absurdly exaggerated,—but few speak of the wealth of the Peking magnates, who could weigh out gold against silver with most of the provincials. His struggle for the mastery with his sister-in-law was the real business of Kung's life, his perfunctory attendances at the Tsungli-yamén and occasional interviews with foreign ministers only rather wearisome by-play. The two antagonists were like wrestlers watching intently for the grip. They were well matched, and the struggle was prolonged for twenty years before one got a decided advantage over the other. The Prince thought he saw his chance already in the early sixties. Scandal was rife, and he thought he could fish something for himself out of the dirty pool.

The chief eunuch was his *bête noire*, because he was the Empress's right hand. Rumor even credited them with relations not altogether consistent with the man's status. Prince Kung intrigued very cleverly to get him sent on a mission to the provinces; it was to buy porcelain for the Empress. His plot was to get rid of the eunuch and justify the public suspicions at one stroke. So he engaged the Governor of Shantung, Tingpao-ching, to arrest the eunuch as he passed through his province, on a charge of treason, execute him on the spot, and expose his body *coram populo*, which was done. Prince Kung scored on his first point, for the eunuch was dead, but failed in the second. Imagine the fury of the Regent at this treachery and indignity to herself, the more terrible that she dared not betray her feelings, but could only watch for occasions to deal underhand blows at her rival. Once she ventured on an open attack, and degraded the Prince by edict, reinstating him next day, merely to show her power and her feeling.

Such being the normal relations between the two leading personages in China, it is not difficult to comprehend the animus of the Regent in supplanting the son of Prince Kung, who was the legal heir to the throne, nor the mortification of the Prince on seeing the Empress's eunuch so handsomely avenged. It was his turn to grin and bear it, as it had been the Empress's before; but sombre acquiescence in the accomplished fact did not prevent the two mortal enemies from worrying each other for another nine years, until a pretext was found in 1884 for degrading and dismissing the Prince from his offices.

The accession of his son, of course, raised the seventh Prince, younger brother of Kung, who was the sixth son of Tao-kwang, to a position of the

first importance; though nine years elapsed before he accepted public responsibility. On his authority as parent, the Regent leaned to maintain herself; and she had consequently to buy him at any price. But he was a weak man, and with Kung in possession of the offices, Prince Ch'un was an inadequate factotum. Her majesty required a second string to her bow, and finding nothing to suit her purpose in the capital, she set her affections on a provincial statesman who was abler than Kung, and more versed in foreign affairs, which were the plague of the Peking Government. For prestige and legality she had the Emperor's father; for executive action, Li Hung-chang, who became the confidant of both. So the Empress-regent's position was assured during the minority of Kwang-su.

The crisis in her fate, as was anticipated, arrived on the present Emperor's coming of age, marriage, and assumption of the Government. Would the Regent frankly resign or still cling to power? and if so, by what means, and under what pretext? The Emperor attained his majority in a rather novel manner. It was not a sudden phenomenon, but a gradual process, resembling the dawn of a summer day in high latitudes rather than the abrupt rising of the equatorial sun. Clearly the Regent was extremely reluctant to lay down the sceptre, and when it was impossible further to retard the unwelcome ceremony, her devices to retain the reality, even when obliged to part with the form of power, were deep and tortuous. It would be impossible, and also unprofitable, to trace these; but the most remarkable of them all deserves particular notice, because of the light it throws on the recent intrigues in Peking, and on the contentions of the last ten years.

The Regent entered into a private

treaty with the Emperor, whereby, in making over to him full powers, she specifically reserved to herself certain articles, twenty-five in number; and she retained in her possession a most important seal, without which the Emperor's authority could never be complete. It is this convention, signed, sealed, and delivered, between Emperor and Regent that is at the bottom of the struggle, and the defeat of the weaker party, which has been announced within the last month. Let us trace shortly the progress of the strife, that we may the better appreciate the outcome.

Notwithstanding this unique convention, the Emperor continued *more Sinico* under the influence of his tutor Wên-tung-ho, who made it his business to fill the pupil's mind with abhorrence of the illegal compact to which he had made himself a party, and of the illegality of the Empress's whole position. His majesty imbibed the inspiration, and then himself, measures which he did not himself understand, calculated to release him, one by one, from the capitulations. His ceremonial visits and obeisances to his adoptive mother were punctually performed, and there were frequent notices in the Peking Gazette and other Chinese papers, dwelling with suspicious iteration on the model filial conduct of the Emperor. But while observing the utmost punctilio in his intercourse, the Emperor, as prompted by his advisers, confined himself strictly to what etiquette demanded,—neither consulting the late Regent nor discussing any public matters with her. An Emperor's party was formed to counteract the ex-Regent, and they scored many successes, some of which emerged clearly into the light of day. Encouraged by these successes, the Emperor's advisers, soon after his full accession, sought and found an occasion for an open at-

tack on the Dowager's party; and, in view of recent occurrences, it is interesting to remember that the *casus belli* in 1889 was then, as now, reform. The only difference is, the parties have changed places. Then it was railway extension—proposed by Li Hung-chang, approved by the Empress-dowager, and nominally sanctioned by the Emperor himself—that was selected by the Emperor's party as the battle-ground. The reactionaries triumphed, and the railway between Tientsin and Peking had to be for the time abandoned. A local critic commented on the incident in the following terms:—

It would be premature to conclude from the struggle over the railway extension that the new Emperor will be wholly given over to a blind and bigoted conservatism. When the new combinations are once settled in their places, and the party which is to rule in the State has made good its position, the immediate cause of hostility to the Tungchow Railway may cease to operate, and the question which is now debated at fever-heat may, like those questions which agitate democratic countries on the eve of elections, fall into wholesome neglect, under cover of which the real statesmen may resume their beneficent projects without the fear of provoking deadly opposition.

And this very railway is now in full running trim, having been opened to traffic this year.

We have written so far to little purpose, if any reader believes that it is questions of reform or any other question but the old one of "ins" and "outs" that divide the Chinese imperial family. Things are not what they seem, and any stone is good enough to throw at an enemy.

Their success in blocking the railway scheme encouraged the Emperor's party to persevere with their plan for extricating his Majesty from

the twenty-five reservations, while the ex-Regent had the misery to see her influence melting away while she was powerless to arrest the process, or to do more than set spies on the proceedings of the plotters,—and wait.

The Japanese war widened the rift in the lute. The Empress-dowager was for peace at any price, as she always has been, while the Emperor's advisers, probably out of simple opposition, demanded war to the knife,—and got it. Li Hung-chang was loyal to his Mistress, and, both from policy and conviction, did what in him lay to evade the war. He was superseded in his territorial and administrative functions, though, with that fatuity which we find it so difficult to understand, he was, nevertheless, left to carry on the war! During this time the Emperor's tutor, Wên-tung-ho, went secretly to Tientsin to spy upon and confer with Li Hung-chang on the situation, which he either failed to understand, or wilfully perverted the truth in the report which he submitted. The issue of the war, of course, stultified the Emperor's party, whose energies were then concentrated on the search for a scape-goat. Not a difficult task in itself, this was rendered easier by the secret communications which Li's subordinate, the famous Shêng, carried on with his enemies.

Passing over, for want of space, the peace mission to Japan,¹ the Palace feud came to a head on the return of the envoy with the treaty of Shimonsaki. This was a most critical juncture. Every preparation was made in Peking to impeach Li Hung-chang and have him executed. A cordon of 25,000 men was supposed to have been placed round the city, into which Li entered virtually a prisoner. The Emperor received him badly,—made him come forward, on his knees, that his

¹ Described in "Maga," September 1895: "The Japanese Imbroglio."

Majesty might put his finger on the alleged bullet wound on Li's face, as intimating disbelief of the fact. A memorial to the throne, setting forth his crimes and misdemeanors and praying for his execution, was signed by the members of the Inner Council, and implicitly accepted by the Emperor without reference to the Empress-dowager, and in direct violation of the twenty-five reservations. The lictors were told off, and the place and time of execution fixed. One thing only was wanting, the assent of Prince Kung. The Prince, who had been summoned out of his retirement by the Empress-dowager before Li Hung-chang was sent to Japan,—a bitter pill for her Majesty,—opposed the attempt on Li. He knew well it was not Li, but the Empress-dowager herself, who was aimed at in this violent action. So, while the other members of the Council proposed to have Li executed first, and report to the Emperor after, Kung's protest saved him.

While these things were going on, the Empress-dowager remained quiescent. Whether she was secretly, through her spies, informed of all that was passing or not, she had no official knowledge of it, and no ostensible ground of action. Possibly she saw no chance of saving Li, and would only have consummated her own defeat by an attempt to save him. But she took courage when the independent action of Prince Kung was reported to her, and at once resumed an active interest in the intrigues. First, she made strenuous efforts to get Kung (on some ceremonial visit to her) to say who they were who were alienating the Emperor's mind from her, his mother and protectrice. But the Prince was silent. Next, on the first occasion when the Emperor was in her presence, making filial obeisance, she suddenly demanded who had advised him in these evil

courses. His Majesty trembled, giving some opening for her suspicions, and for further questions. Putting him completely in the wrong as unfilial, she advanced from one point to another until she had put all the conspirators in a fright, and driven them—especially Wên-tung-ho—to seek each a scape-goat for himself.

Thus by sheer energy she gathered up the threads one by one, regained her position gradually, and took back the powers of which she had been deprived by the machinations of the Emperor's advisers.

How the Empress used her victory would bear telling; but let it suffice to say that by a course of truculent procedure she so cowed, not only the Emperor, but his whole *entourage*, that every one of them was afraid of his life. They recalled the fate of the first Council of Regency, the fate they had themselves prepared for Li Hung-chang,—and none dared to be found on any side but that of the strong-minded woman.

One unpremeditated result of the fierce conflict in 1895 was the mission of Li Hung-chang to Moscow in 1896, whither he was sent by his imperial Mistress, partly to get him out of harm's way till matters were more settled in Peking. The outcome of that mission, indicated in "Maga" nine months ago,² has been extensively developed since, in a sense which gives a certain point to comments current when the dynastic conflict was in its incandescent stage. Among notes made in 1892, for instance, we find such remarks as these:—

The young Emperor entirely fails to show either capacity or sense of duty, being given over to frivolity, and report says . . . vice. . . These facts [the "shameless avarice" of the Em-

² "The Crisis in China," February 1896.

press-Dowager, and such like] may have a great significance in the evolution of the empire. Patriotism being entirely subordinated to personal interest and indulgence, the way may be opened for some Ignatieff to effect a *coup* like that of 1858, which was believed to have been achieved by working on the cupidity of high officials.

The practical conclusion of the whole matter for us is that, be her motives, character, and sentiments what they may, the Usurper is *de facto* sovereign by virtue of her force of will and the absence of capable rivals. All hopes of a manly reign were years ago abandoned, when the promise of the young Emperor began to unfold. Effeminate, vicious, and without character, the sovereign was born to be a puppet in the hands of stronger men. He has, moreover, been in bad hands. His tutor and chief adviser is a reactionary, ignorant of affairs to a surprising degree, not beyond hope of conversion and enlightenment perhaps; but when the welfare of the State has to wait for the education of an old man—Saul becoming Paul—the case is rather hopeless.

As to the reform schemes recently promulgated, the announcement was enough to make the judicious grieve.

Blackwood's Magazine.

A few hours' conversation with a visionary, and then a root-and-branch reform that would make the heart of the stoutest Radical stand still! Does the monarch know his own country? Here in England, the cradle of reform, it would take fifty years and half-a-dozen royal Commissions to reform one Government office; and this amiable young man, without knowledge or experience, proposes to revolutionize at one stroke an empire ten times our size, and the most conservative of all States. It was about time the Dowager stepped in to recover her twenty-five points, and perhaps seventy-five more which were not reserved.

The quality of the Empress's rule—for we may now call her so without affix—can only be judged by what it was during the Regency, when she was at the head of every movement that partook of the character of reform. Foreign diplomacy has failed, for want of a definite center of volition and sensation to act upon. It had no fulcrum for its lever. Hence only force has ever succeeded in China. With a woman like the Empress might it not be possible really to transact business?

HER ANSWER.

If you had come
Ten years ago,
And your mute lips the love had spoken
Your eyes betrayed, ah! then unbroken
Had been the bowl at love's clear fount,
And you had drawn and drunk; but lo!
Your lips were dumb
Ten years ago!

The Gentleman's Magazine.

E. Gibson.

NAT AND NATTY.

Natty Byrne sat on his high stool near the one window of the cabin in the falling dusk. He was tired of waiting, very tired, but his grandfather's orders had been explicit: "Shtay here, Natty, 'till ye see me agin; there is bread in the cupboard, an' maybe a taste o' butther, and I'll bring somethin' swate for ye from Carmore."

I do not say that Natty had not thought of disobeying; as a matter of fact, the temptation had recurred at short intervals during the whole afternoon; once in the almost irresistible form that he ought to go and look at the pig, but he had got no further than the door. He had a great feeling of importance, too; he had never been left alone for so long before, and the burden of responsibility pleased him; he had also a vague idea that something was going to happen, because, two days before, his grandfather had written a letter. That letter had cost old Nat half a day's work, and he had used a whole penny packet of stationery over it.

As it grew darker Natty began to feel a little afraid; he would have left the high stool if the dignity derived from his exalted position had not balanced the fact that his bare feet did not touch the ground. He was very proud of the stool, no other boy he knew had one like it, and, although it was extremely inconvenient, he often insisted upon eating his meals at that distinguished altitude.

From time to time he glanced furtively round the cabin. Old Nat's bed, narrow and dark, set against the wall like a ship's berth, had a sinister look in that ambiguous twilight; even Natty's own little crib, which consisted of a deal platform raised a foot from

the floor, with a mattress on the top of it, looked unfamiliar. The peats on the open hearth burned dimly; the chairs seemed to have doubled in bulk since the sunshine faded; the rough wood table loomed large and grim. After every furtive survey the boy brought his eyes back to the gray square of the window with a little shivering gasp. It occurred to him to light the lamp, but as that was an office he had never performed, it being beyond his years, he felt himself unequal to the task. Besides, that would mean trotting over the floor, and in the darkness his bare feet might touch something horrible.

But all at once he grew quite brave again, for he heard the sound of footsteps coming slowly up the mountain pathway. It was too dark to see who it was, but of course it must be old Nat, and Natty promptly began to wonder what the "something swate" might be that was at that moment, doubtless, getting warm and sticky in his grandfather's pocket. He climbed down from his stool and pattered softly over the hard earth floor to the door. The footsteps paused and there was a knock. Natty's heart went down into his plump toes; he was so terrified that he could not move to raise the latch. The knock was not repeated, but the door was softly opened and Natty saw a dim head thrust in.

"Is Nat Byrne at home?" asked a voice.

"Plase, sorr, no!" gasped Natty.

"Whin'll he be back, an' who are you at all?"

"He'll be back, sorr, this minute, an' plase, I'm Natty."

The stranger came in and closed the door. He peered curiously round the room.

"An' who's Natty? Where are ye at all?"

"Here," said Natty.

"Is it down there ye are? Well, well! Have ye a light? Sure a cat couldn't see in the like av this!"

Natty, somewhat reassured, set a small lamp on the table, and carried a box of matches to his visitor.

"Will ye light it, sorr? I don't know the way av it."

The matches were taken from his hand and presently, to the boy's relieved eyes, the familiar cabin shone before him again. He was afraid no longer; the idea of a thief never occurred to him, and if it had, so far as Natty knew there was nothing to steal.

"Sit down, sorr," he said, "in the little chair," he added, "the big wan's grandad's."

The stranger obeyed him in silence, and Natty climbed up to his stool again, to bring himself to a proper conversational level.

"So ye're Tom's and Biddy's boy?"

"I am that," said Natty.

"An' a pretty pair they was," murmured the stranger. He was a little, narrow-chested man, dressed in what seemed a Sunday suit of rusty black. His jaw was square, the lips very thin and pursed, a pair of small black eyes glinted above wrinkled cheeks, the hair was close cropped round his bullet head. The boy decided that he didn't like him much.

"How ould are ye?" the man asked.

"Siven," said Natty.

"Is it so long?" said the other. After a long silence Natty arose suddenly to the responsibility of his position.

"Are ye hungry, sorr?" he asked.

"I am, dead hungry."

The boy brought out the remains of the bread and butter from the cupboard, also a bowl of milk.

"Grandad," he explained, "'Il maybe bring somethin' betther. Was he expectin' ye at all, sorr?"

"He was, for he sint me a letter."

"Thin it was you the letter went to?"

"It kem to me, anyway."

Natty was disappointed; he had vaguely anticipated greater results than this from the letter.

"He wouldn't expect me tonight," the other explained. "'Twas to-morrow mornin' I should have come, but I had a slack day, worse luck, and used it this way."

The boy nodded. Then he asked, "Are ye one o' mine?"

"What do you mane?"

"'Lations."

"To be sure I am—yer cousin. Did ye niver hear av me?"

"What name have ye, sorr?"

"Me name," said the little man, with crackling dignity, "is Timothy Daly."

"Thin ye're cousin Tim?"

"I am."

There was another pause, in which Natty began to feel some slight natural drawings toward the new relation and with them came a renewed sense of his duty as host.

"Are ye tired, cousin Tim?" he asked.

"Dog tired, boy."

"Thin ye might set in grandad's chair; 'tis fine an' 'aisy."

Daly made an exchange of seats without speaking. He was, in fact, very tired indeed, and not over pleased at old Byrne's mysterious summons. The men had not met for six years, and there had been no love lost between them at any time. Daly was a well-to-do, hard-headed man to whom poor relatives were as dregs in his cup of fortune, but he never denied the hold of blood if he sometimes disregarded its claims.

"Do thim boots hurt ye?" Natty inquired, curling up his own naked toes.

"They do," said Daly, "an' I've walked twelve miles in 'em."

"Tek 'em off," said Natty. "Wait,"

he added, jumping once more from his stool, "I'll do it for ye, cousin Tim."

He was down on his knees before Daly had time to say a word, and whether it was the simple kindness of the action, or the sight of the curly, bent head, or the unfamiliar touch of little fingers, I cannot say; but the man was struck home.

"Och, but it's a good boy ye are," he said, patting Natty's cheek.

"Boots," said Natty, speaking from an infinitesimal experience, "is terrible tirin' to the fate. There, cousin Tim; now I'll sthir up the fire an' put on another pate."

This being accomplished Natty again perched himself on his stool. Daly watched him with blinking eyes; the keen mountain air had made him sleepy, and a feeling of drowsy kindness crept over him; he nodded now and then, awaking with a jerk, and always to find Natty's benign gaze fixed upon him.

"Go to slape," said Natty, "an' I'll wake ye whin grandad comes."

Daly smiled and settled back in his chair; in a moment he was asleep. It seemed to the boy that cousin Tim's head must be uncomfortable against the hard wood, so he got his own small pillow, which had a chronic dusky hue, and settled it under the man's wiry hair. Daly again smiled feebly, but without opening his eyes.

Half an hour after this Natty heard other footsteps. He held up a warning finger as Nat entered, and pointed to the sleeping visitor.

"'Tis Tim, sure," murmured the old man.

"He's slapin'," whispered Natty.

Nat set down the great basket he was carrying cautiously upon the table, and examined Tim Daly with the closest attention. The survey did not please him particularly.

"Jist the same," he said; "divil a

change—a black, hard man, God help 'im!" There was a strange glitter in the old man's red-rimmed eyes, a look in which anger and triumph contended, but the latter won. He had the marks of a hard life upon face and body, deep lines, bent shoulders, knotted and clumsy hands; his feet dragged as he moved, all the spring had long since left his joints; yet he carried himself with a certain open dignity. Ragged gray hair fell around a face sharply eager and aquiline.

The first thing he did was to take a bag of sweets from his pockets; these were transferred to Natty, who immediately fell to a contented munching of them. Then he unpacked the basket and revealed to the boy's astonished gaze luxuries which he had only dreamed of or seen in shop windows at Carmore—a tin of salmon, a pot of jam, three loaves of white bread, a cake in silver paper and a bottle of wine. Nat had hesitated long over the wine, but he had convinced himself that it was the proper thing, and so at last had bought it. All these viands were set forth upon the table and Nat fell back to admire the effect.

"'Tis shiplendid," said Natty.

"Ye may say that, indade! This'll be a great avenin', bedad! Not that ye'll understand it, pet, but thim as wint'll know. God rest 'em!"

"Is we to ate thim things?" asked the boy.

"What else'll they be for? An' you'll have yer share, too." Natty made a noise that indicated passionate inner surprise and joy.

These preparations had not disturbed the sleeping man, so Nat sat down to rest. He looked very old and weary, very near the end of life, but what remained burned clearly; his one hope for six years had been to accomplish what he was at last ready

to do that night. But when he looked at Natty his eyes grew a little dim.

At last he rose and touched Daly upon the shoulder.

"That's a good boy, now," the man murmured.

"He thinks 'tis me," said Natty, grinning. A more vigorous shake brought him upright and fully awake.

"You're welcome, Tim Daly."

"Ah, an' ye're back thin, Nat."

They shook hands with manifest restraint.

"Ye'll egscuse me," said Nat, "fur kapin' yer waitin', but 'twas to-morrer I egpected ye."

"'Twas to-morrer the littler said, but I had a slack day and kem. I was tellin' Natty there av it." He rested his hand for a moment on Natty's head. Nat drew the boy quickly away.

"Lave 'im be!" he said.

Tim colored slightly and turned to reach his hands over the fire. "I s'pose ye thinks a power o' that boy," he said.

"I think the world av 'im. I ver since he were a raw babe I've done for 'im, an' why wouldn't I be proud av 'im now?"

"Thruer for ye!" said Tim, "why not, indade?"

"Dhraw up," said Nat, "an' let's ate. Afther, we'll talk o' why I sint for ye, Tim."

They drew near the table and fell to. The men glanced at each other furtively from time to time; in Nat's eyes the triumph still shone, in Tim Daly's there was a half-pathetic, questioning look, as though he did not quite understand it all. But Natty was perfectly unconcerned. This god-like feast excluded every other possible thought or sensation—he ate and was satisfied.

After the meal was over came the time of pipes and silence. Tim and Nat sat on opposite sides of the hearth,

Natty, feeling unequal to the ascent of his high stool, squatted complacently on the edge of his bed. He soon became so sleepy that his head dropped forward with a jerk.

"Shlape inside yer bed, Natty, not outside," said the old man. "Aff wid thim things, boy, quick."

Natty disrobed in an incredibly short space of time—the untying of a single string seemed to complete the operation. Nat looked lovingly at the plump, brown body.

"Fat?" he murmured to himself. "He's fat as butther, the darlint!" Natty dived under his blanket and promptly went to sleep.

After a time Nat rose and crossed the uneven floor to the bedside. He turned back the blanket to make sure that Natty was safely dreaming, and then stooped awkwardly towards the boy's face; but his back was too stiff for such exercise, and he had to fall upon his knees to kiss the moist forehead. Tim Daly did not turn, but he saw what was happening by the shadow thrown on the white wall. Nat remained on his knees for a minute, and the watcher of the shadow saw the sign of the cross made on brow and breast.

The old man rose and came back to the hearth. For a moment he stood there, gazing down into the glowing peats, and it was clear to Tim that a struggle was going on in Nat's heart, a struggle that shook him bitterly; but presently he threw his head sharply up, and it was over. He moved a loose stone from the wall above the chimney and took out a little leather bag; from his pocket he took another; these he laid tremblingly upon the table and untied the strings. Tim Daly, still watching silently, saw a glittering stream of gold trickle from the bags. Nat counted it in tens—there were four little piles of ten sovereigns each.

He turned to Daly with a face that showed pale beneath its tan. "With that," he said, "I pay back to ye what me son Tom Byrne borrowed, an' I ask ye to onsay the bittther word ye spoke."

"What do ye mane?" asked Daly, chokingly.

"Ye know well what I mane. Did'n't the poor boy borry forty pound av ye?"

"He did."

"An' didn't ye say to me, the breath bein' hardly out av 'is body, 'The blaggard,' ye said, 'niver mint to pay me back'? Thim was the words, an' 'im dead; 'The blaggard niver mint to pay me back.'"

"I was in dhrink," said Daly.

"An' I was dhrunk, too, wid sorrer for 'im as 'ad gone. I pay the debt to-ye tonight, Tim Daly, an' I ask ye before God, to onsay thim words, an' ye'll dhrink to 'im as died for an honest man. For six years I've sweated to win the gould an' me boy's good name, an' there it is, ivery penny av it, an' if I die to-night I'll die aisy."

Daly glanced toward the sleeping Natty and rubbed his dry lips with the back of his hand.

"So that's why ye sint for me?" he asked.

"That I might gev it into yer own hand."

"Then ye'll be a rich man now, Nat?"

"Rich? Begorra, how 'ud I be rich? 'Tis all I have, and well spint for the boy."

"An' what'll Natty do?"

"Don't spake av 'im!" cried the old man sharply. "He must work now, he's sthrong an' well."

"But forty pound, an' what ye might add to it, 'ud make 'im a good start in life."

"I've no forty pound for 'im. Take yer gould, Tim, an' onsay thim words."

Daly looked again towards Natty's

bed and then at the gold. The money drew hard at his heart-strings, but something in him had sprung to life stronger than his passion for gain.

"Ye musht think well av me," he said, "to trate me the like av this."

"I think no ill of yer, beyant bein' a hard man."

Daly craned forward and spat fiercely into the fire.

"I'm not so damned hard as that!" he cried. "Would I take the gould from the child there? God save me! Would I touch a penny of 'is as called me cousin an' rested me and put 'is own piller under my head? Would I be the black villyan to do divil's work on a child? Kape yer money for thim as wants it; I'll not soll me fingers wid it!" His voice had risen to a shout.

"'Tis yours," said Nat, doggedly, "an' wid it I clear me son Tom."

Tim sprang to his feet, a wild, gesticulating figure, and hurried to the table. He crammed the money into the bags again and dashed them down with a clash.

"Put the gold in yer pocket," Nat said.

"Anther word," said Daly, "an' I fling it in the fire, by God!" Nat rose and the two men faced each other.

"Because I was a blaggard once, an' in dhrink, must ye always choke me wid it? I hould Tom's name as high as me own, an' the man as blackens it I'll break! That money belongs to Natty there."

The loud voices had awakened the boy; he was watching with round, wondering eyes.

"Thin ye'll clear Tom, an'll swear he was an honest man?"

"I will."

"An' the gould's for Natty?"

"For me cousin Natty, God bless 'im." The old man filled two glasses tremulously, and into a third he poured a little of the precious stuff

that was to signify the clearing of Tom Byrne's name.

"Sit up, Natty," he said, "an' dhrink; 'tis for yer father, avick!"

Longman's Magazine.

And Natty sat up and drank and spluttered over the strange liquor, while the two men watched him with burning eyes.

Charles Kennett Burrow.

THE ANIMAL FEAR OF MAN.

In a previous number of the *Spectator* some account was given of the evidence collected by ancient and modern naturalists, from Don Felix d'Azara to Mr. Hudson, that the puma, the second largest of the big cats of South America, neither feared man nor regarded human beings as its prey, but on the contrary sought their society, and even protected man from the attacks of the jaguar. Trustworthy facts which lend additional confirmation to this interesting question must necessarily be slowly acquired. The following anecdote, which comes at first hand from one long resident in British Guiana, supports the belief that the puma seeks the society of man instead of attacking or fearing him. When making an expedition up one of the large rivers in a steam-launch, our friend gave a passage to an elderly Cornish miner, who was anxious to reach the gold-fields. Not wishing to intrude upon his hosts, he did not sleep on board the launch, but always slung his hammock between two trees on shore. As climbing into a high-slung hammock is not easy, he usually fastened it rather low, and his weight probably brought it to within three feet of the ground at the bottom of the curve. One morning, being asked how he had slept, he complained that "the frogs had made such a noise underneath his hammock that they had kept him awake." Some Indians of the crew who were folding up the hammock laughed a good deal

when they heard this, and being asked the reason, said, still laughing, "Oh, 'tiger' sleep with old man last night." They had found under the hammock the marks of where a puma had lain. The noise which had kept the occupier of the hammock awake was probably the purring of the puma, pleased at occupying the "next berth" below a man. As these Guiana Indians have in addition to the unerring eye of the forest-dweller, a special liking and capacity for taming animals, it can hardly be doubted that their conclusion was correct. Such an absence of fear, and liking for human society, could only be paralleled by the behavior of some domestic cats. Yet in the case of the puma this can only be a survival of a primitive disposition, which has already been lost in a great measure by the same species in North America. Are we, then, to suppose that the absence of that fear of man so general among even the large carnivora was the rule in the primitive world? If it was, we shall have to account for the survival of man in the presence of creatures which did not fear him, and possessed a far more effective physical equipment for attack than man possessed for defense; for we cannot suppose that the benevolent neutrality which can safely be attributed to the puma was exhibited by the other carnivora. The evidence that fear is not the natural attitude of animals towards man is mainly of two kinds,—the notes of explorers who

have pushed into the few regions of earth where animals were numerous, but man had not trodden; and the results of the very latest experiments of to-day in districts where the killing of animals has been absolutely prohibited. In other words, we must compare the behavior of the creatures in the Arctic seas in the days of Wiloughby and Barents, or in the voyage of Weddell to the Antarctic, with the latest reports from Yellowstone Park. The results show a striking agreement in the demeanor of the beasts when first confronted with the new creature, man. Few of them exhibited fear, so far as the records show. When Barents's crew were on their first voyage a Polar bear, who probably had never seen men before, took one of the crew, who was lying down, by the back of his neck, and, after dragging him some way, bit the top of his head off. Even now the Polar bear is the least shy of his race, though so constantly hunted.

The general tendency of wild animals kept in large reserves and never molested points to the same conclusion, though for obvious reasons none of the most dangerous carnivora can be maintained in such places. The fear of man is lost by creatures wild and free but unmolested, so quickly as to be matter of surprise to those most conversant with animals in captivity. Reports published in the United States newspapers dwell repeatedly on the loss of the fear of man by all animals in Yellowstone Park, where the deer (both wapiti and black-tailed deer) come to the houses to be fed, and even eat the flowers from the window-boxes. Brown bears hang round the hotels and come daily to eat the refuse carted into the woods close by, and many of the smaller rodents are absolutely fearless. In menageries and zoological gardens the fear of man is lost mainly by constant and daily con-

tact, with no power to escape, and by the remembrance that it is man who provides their food. But here the conditions are abnormal, and it would be useless to draw conclusions from the behavior towards man of animals in captivity, and apply them to the solution of the earlier problem of the innate or acquired character of their fear of human beings. It is, however, matter of general knowledge that where man is weak and beasts strong and numerous, as in the country beyond the Zambesi and Shiré Rivers, the boldness of the animals leads to serious disasters. In the present day the only frequent reports of attacks of lions and leopards on men, for food, and not in self-defence or fright, come from these districts, though the story is as old as the rebuilding of Samaria.

If, as seems probable, the animal fear of man was acquired, and is not natural to their minds, it is not very clear how the very early tribes of men, when the larger carnivorous animals were far more numerous than now, escaped destruction and survived long enough to impress on the animal world the sense of fear by which man now dominates it. Regarded merely as a conflict between one class of animals and another, the result should not have been doubtful. Man ought to have disappeared from the face of the earth, or, in any case, to have retreated to remote strongholds in regions not frequented by the beasts. That he did not do so, but turned the tables on the better equipped offensive creature, is fair presumptive evidence that original man never was on a level with the animals in intelligence, but was equipped with the predominant brain-power which has put him ahead in the race ever since. Primitive man, literally speaking, "lived by his wits," for he could have owed his survival to little else. He was not, for example, nearly so well equipped as the

monkeys for physical defence or flight, though their survival is not altogether easy to explain on purely physical grounds. Their power of using their arms and hands as a means of swinging rapidly from branch to branch gives them an advantage over all the tree-climbing cats. Their habit of throwing missiles is also very disconcerting to other animals, though this art is only practised by certain monkeys. But their rapid and intelligent combination for defence, menace, and look-out duty has contributed quite as much to their survival as their speed and activity. In tropical America even the monkeys are hard put to it to escape the attacks of such active and formidable foes as the harpy eagle and the ocelot. But it cannot be proved that even the most debased or physically weakest of mankind has ever been the "natural prey" of that "natural enemy" which, according to Sir Samuel Baker, is the nightmare of nearly every species of non-carnivorous animal. The causes which make exceptions to this rule are temporary and narrowly local. Even the Greenlander and the Esquimaux are the masters of the Polar bear, and probably always have been, though little better armed than primitive man, and the pigmies of the Central African forests are mighty hunters. It may even be that the neighborhood of fierce animals aided the early development of man; for the least developed races are largely found in such places as

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Tierra del Fuego, where, in the absence of savage beasts, savage man had no inducement to arm and equip himself.

But man has had an even more potent ally than his own ingenuity which from remote antiquity has invested him in the mind of the animal world with something of the supernatural. He is ever accompanied by the one element which the animal mind cannot create, cannot understand, stands in constant awe of, and dreads by night, when its courage is greatest, and that of man least steady. Fire, that pillar of cloud and flame which precedes not the aggregate human host, but the smallest fragment of the invading army, the constant and dreaded harbinger of human presence, springing up, as the beasts must think, automatically from the earth wherever man rests his body, guarding him in sleeping and waking, always associated with his abode, has for ages terrified the beasts.

Since the first appearance of man in any given region of the earth he has been teaching the beast to fear him; and it is not until to-day, when he is absolutely their master, and has, in many instances, totally destroyed them, that he thinks of restoring on a tiny scale, and on a few spots on the earth's surface, the "state of Nature," and allowing those creatures, which he dares to experiment with, once more to lay aside their acquired terror, which makes them flee his presence.

WIT AND HUMOR.

In his "Talks with Mr. Gladstone" the Hon. Mr. Tollemache notes an odd confession by the statesman, of his inability to distinguish between wit and humor. To us it seems that wit and

humor have hardly anything in common but a common object. Both note with laughter incongruous resemblances or unlooked-for dissimilarities, but they note them in a manner

altogether different, and in an altogether different spirit. While wit sees only a part, humor sees the whole; and while wit glances at the little it sees with indifference, or with contempt, or with malice, humor looks always with love. Perhaps, indeed, these two differences resolve themselves into one,—the difference in width and range of view. "*Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*," says the divine French aphorism, and with humor to see all is to love all. Humor sees not merely the incongruity or absurdity on the surface, but looks deeper into its source and secret; and looks not deeper only but wider also; sees not merely the incongruity or absurdity, but the man who commits it,—his circumstances, antecedents, etc.; puts itself in his place, understands, forgives and loves. In one word, humor is sympathetic, while wit is indifferent, apathetic or anti-pathetic. Let us take in illustration a man who was at once a supreme wit and a supreme humorist,—Charles Lamb. First, let us take instances of his wit: "Charles, did you ever hear me lecture?" asked Coleridge. "I—I—I never heard you do anything else," stuttered Lamb. Here you have a single point, and that the most characteristic and vulnerable in Coleridge, deftly and exquisitely pinked. Take another instance, and an admirable one, of Lamb's searching wit: "Wordsworth," he writes to Manning, "Wordsworth says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakespeare, if he had a mind to try it. It is clear nothing is wanting but the mind." Here, again, you have a single point, and that the most characteristic and vulnerable,—the sublime conceit of the poet,—tartly and brilliantly hit off. In each case the wit was perfect of its kind. The besetting and insufferable weakness of each poet is in the very neatest possible manner

put in the very strongest possible light of ridicule. But the light is an electric search-light, chill and lurid, turned for a single instant upon a single point, which it exposes with pitiless intensity.

The light of humor, on the other hand, is like the light in a mother's eyes when she looks with love and laughter at the little and natural follies of her child. They are laughable follies certainly, but they are follies of a child, and of her child, and she makes for them, therefore, all the allowance of love. Now it is light of this kind,—not chill as the light on snow,—but light that has been warmed and tinted in passing through an atmosphere of love, which charms and wins you in the "Essays of Elia." Take, for example, the first of these essays, which is not the most interesting, which has perhaps the least interesting subject,—the old clerks of the South-Sea House. Suppose Lamb had let his wit play upon the weak points of these small men as he let it play upon the weak points of such big men as Wordsworth and Coleridge, what scornful fun he might have made of the morbid suspiciousness of Evans, of Thomas Thame's imposing and patronizing inanity, of the dreary formality or the still drearier fiddling of John Tipp. These are the single points which would strike a wit, and which a wit would strike deftly and relentlessly till he made you scorn such pitiful creatures. But humor does not see and seize on these points only; it goes deeper down to their spring and source, and it not only goes deeper down, but it takes a wider range and sees the whole man with a sympathy which loves and makes you love all that you laugh at. In all the personal essays, in the essays on Ellistoun, on Dyer, on Fenwick, on Captain Jackson, on the Old Benchers, and on "My Relations," you see the same lam-

bent light playing upon and around its subject till weaknesses which a wit would have made despicable by his scorn are by the humorist made loveable by his love. "Do you not hate So-and-so?" Lamb was asked, and he made the answer of a true humorist: "How could I hate him? Don't I

know him? I never could hate anyone I knew." It is this knowledge of men, deep and wide, and therefore sympathetic, which marks the true humorist, who, seeing all things always from a divine height, makes always, and for all, divine allowances.

The Speaker.

GENIUS.

Far out at sea—the sun was high,
While veer'd the wind and flapp'd the sail—
We saw a snow-white butterfly
Dancing before the fitful gale,
Far out at sea!

The little wanderer, who had lost
His way, of danger nothing knew;
Settled awhile upon the mast—
Then flutter'd o'er the waters blue,
Far out at sea.

Above, there gleam'd the boundless sky!
Beneath, the boundless ocean sheen;
Between them danced the butterfly,
The spirit-life of this vast scene—
Far out at sea.

The tiny soul then soar'd away,
Seeking the clouds on fragile wings,
Lured by the brighter, purer ray,
Which hope's ecstatic morning brings,
Far out at sea.

Away he sped with shimmering glee!
Scarce seen—now lost—yet onward borne!
Night comes!—with wind and rain—and he
No more will dance before the morn,
Far out at sea.

He dies unlike his mates, I ween;
Perhaps not sooner, or worse cross'd—
And he hath felt, thought, known and seen
A larger life and hope—though lost!
Far out at sea!

Richard Hengist Horne.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Mr. Kenneth Grahame's "Dream Days," which is now in press by Mr. John Lane, is said to be a return to the "Golden Age" manner.

The late Lady Martin (Helen Faucit) is described by *The Spectator* as the original heroine of three of Browning's plays: "Strafford," "Colombe's Birthday" and "The Blot on the Scutcheon."

The *Athenæum* reports that the veteran Dr. Smiles has had a sudden and serious attack of illness, from which, however, he has happily rallied. It is added that he has recently finished his autobiography.

Professor Sayce has in preparation, for publication, probably next fall, a volume on "Early Israel and the Surrounding Nations" in which he will embody the latest discoveries of Assyriologists and other explorers.

Apropos of the cheap magazine competition in England, *The Academy* reports that a large emporium in the suburbs of London gives its customers the *Harmsworth Magazine* in lieu of change, and that a draper in Reading sells the *Royal Magazine* at 13-4d. a copy.

Sir Edward Hamilton, in his monograph upon Mr. Gladstone (Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers) records the interesting fact that Mr. Gladstone felt all the pride of an amateur author in his earnings for his literary labors, and entered these amounts in a separate book kept for that purpose.

According to *The Academy*, the cheap edition of the *Encyclopædia Britan-*

nica, thanks to the energy with which its sale has been pushed by *The London Times*, on the instalment plan, has affected general bookselling unfavorably; many good book-buyers reporting that they have exhausted their available funds on the work.

The Academy prints approvingly the note of a correspondent who calls attention to the popular craving for humorous works in fiction, as evinced by the incessant demand at the book-stores for "something really funny." Perhaps this is a reaction from the gruesome and excessively sanguinary, represented in the current historical romance.

It is announced that the Sultan has been so irritated by Mr. Hulme Beaman's "Twenty Years in the Near East" that the Turkish government has peremptorily forbidden the admission of the book into the empire. This is regarded as a good advertisement of the volume in question, for it is assumed that the qualities which make it displeasing to the Sultan must enhance its interest for the outside world.

The present season has given us nothing daintier, either in letter-press or illustration, than Mr. Ernest Seton Thompson's "Wild Animals I Have Known," (Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers), from which the story of "The Captive Fox" was quoted in *The Living Age* for December 3. The book has all the fascination of the "Jungle" stories, without their fantastic quality, and the author's illustrations, which are scattered through the text and margins, are exquisite.